



**Administration for Children and Families**

Administration on Children, Youth and Families

Family Connection Grants: Child Welfare/TANF Collaboration in Kinship Navigation Programs

HHS-2012-ACF-ACYF-CF-0510

Application Due Date: 07/16/2012

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**Department of Health & Human Services  
Administration for Children & Families**

**Program Office:** Administration on Children, Youth and Families - Children's Bureau  
**Funding Opportunity Title:** Family Connection Grants: Child Welfare/TANF Collaboration in Kinship Navigation Programs  
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**Notice:** On January 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families implemented required electronic application submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for discretionary grant applications. (76 Fed. Reg. 66721-66723, October 27, 2011, [New Policies and Procedural Requirements for the Electronic Submission of Discretionary Grant Applications](#)). Please see *Section III.3. Disqualification Factors*, *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission* and *Application Submission Options*, and *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates and Times* for information on electronic application submission and the availability of exemptions allowing applicants to submit applications in paper format.

**Executive Summary:**

The purpose of this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) is to solicit applications for projects that will demonstrate:

- The effectiveness of Kinship Navigator (KN) programs in supporting connections between children/youth, who are in, or at risk of entering, foster care, and their family members, and in helping them and their kinship caregivers identify and access appropriate and meaningful services to achieve and sustain permanency; and
- How the collaborative approach of Child Welfare (CW) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs in KN programs improves outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being for the target population of children/youth and their family members.

Under the provisions of the funding legislation, these grant programs will:

- Assist kinship caregivers in learning about, finding, and using programs and services to meet the needs of the children they are raising and their own needs; and
- Promote effective partnerships among public and private agencies to ensure kinship caregiver families are served.

Grant projects funded under this announcement will be implemented through strong collaboration between the grantee, the public CW agency (if the grantee is a private, non-profit organization), and the agency administering the TANF program. Grant projects will be designed to strengthen protective factors as a means to promote well-being and support healthy, positive functioning in children, youth, and families served or potentially served by both the CW and TANF systems.

Applicants should note that the authorizing legislation specifies the following:

- Federal share of the total project cost will decline and non-Federal share match levels will increase in the third year of the 3-year grant period, as required by section 427(d) of the Social Security Act. (Grantees must provide at least 25 percent of the total approved cost of the project for the first two

years of the project period, and 50 percent of the total approved cost of the project in the third year of the project period.); and

- No more than 50 percent of the non-Federal share may be in kind, as required by section 427(e) of the Social Security Act.

## **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

### **Statutory Authority**

The legislative authority is section 427 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 627) as amended by the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub.L. 110-351, section 102(a).

### **Description**

Kinship Navigator (KN) programs funded under this Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) will support the connection between family members and children/youth who are in, or at risk of entering, foster care by helping kinship caregivers identify and access appropriate and meaningful services. Projects will assist kinship caregivers in learning about, finding, and using programs and services to meet the needs of the children and youth they are raising and their own needs. By facilitating linkages to these services, projects will help strengthen protective factors as a means to promote well-being and support healthy, positive functioning, with the goal of assisting caregivers to achieve and sustain permanency for the children in their care.

Further, grant projects will demonstrate how the collaborative approach of Child Welfare (CW) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) programs improves outcomes of KN programs related to safety, permanency and well-being for the target population of children/youth and their family members. Projects will be implemented through strong collaboration between the grantee; the public CW agency (if the grantee is a private, non-profit organization); and the agency administering the TANF program. Project activities will promote effective partnerships among public and private agencies to meet the needs of kinship caregiver families served or potentially served by both the CW and TANF systems.

For definitions of commonly used words in this FOA, please reference the DEFINITIONS list at the end of *Section I*.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Administration on Children, Youth and Families (ACYF)**

Within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), ACYF administers national programs for children and youth; works with States, tribes, and local communities to develop services that support and strengthen family life; seeks joint ventures with the private sector to enhance the lives of children and their families; and provides information and other assistance to parents. Many of the programs administered by ACYF focus on children from low-income families; abused and neglected children; children and youth in need of foster care, independent living, adoption, or other child welfare services; preschool children; children with disabilities; runaway and homeless youth; and children from Native American and migrant families.

### **Ensuring the Well-Being of Vulnerable Children and Families**

ACYF is committed to facilitating healing and recovery, and promoting the social and emotional well-being of children who have experienced maltreatment, exposure to violence, and/or trauma. This FOA and other discretionary spending this fiscal year are designed to ensure that effective interventions are in place to build skills and capacities that contribute to the healthy, positive, and productive functioning of children and youth into adulthood.

Children who have experienced maltreatment, exposure to violence, and/or trauma are impacted along

several domains, each of which must be addressed in order to foster social and emotional well-being and promote healthy, positive functioning:

- **Understanding Experiences:** A fundamental aspect of the human experience is the development of a world view through which one's experiences are understood. Whether that perspective is generally positive or negative impacts how experiences are interpreted and integrated. For example, one is more likely to approach a challenge as a surmountable, temporary obstacle if his or her frame includes a sense that "things will turn out alright." On the contrary, negative experiences can color how future experiences are understood. Ongoing experiences of abuse might lead children to believe they deserve to be maltreated and affect their ability to enter into and stay engaged in safe and healthy relationships. Interventions should seek to address how young people frame what has happened to them in the past and their beliefs about the future.
- **Developmental Tasks:** People grow physically and psychosocially along a fairly predictable course, encountering normal challenges and establishing competencies as they pass from one developmental stage to another. However, adverse events have a marked effect on the trajectory of normal social and emotional development, delaying the growth of certain capacities, and, in many cases, accelerating the maturation of others. Intervention strategies must be attuned to the developmental impact of negative experiences and address related strengths and deficits to ensure children and youth develop along a healthy trajectory.
- **Coping Strategies:** The methods that young people develop to manage challenges both large and small are learned in childhood, honed in adolescence, and practiced in adulthood. Those who have been presented with healthy stressors and opportunities to overcome them with appropriate encouragement and support are more likely to have an array of positive, productive coping strategies available to them as they go through life. For children who grow up in unsafe, unpredictable environments, the coping strategies that may have protected them in that context may not be appropriate for safer, more regulated situations. Interventions should help children and youth transform maladaptive coping methods into healthier, more productive strategies.
- **Protective Factors:** A wealth of research has demonstrated that the presence of certain contextual factors (e.g., supportive relatives, involvement in after-school activities) and characteristics (e.g., self-esteem, relationship skills) can moderate the impacts of past and future negative experiences. These protective factors are fundamental to resilience; building them is integral to successful intervention with children, youth, and families.

The skills and capacities in these areas support children and youth as challenges, risks, and opportunities arise. In particular, each domain impacts the capacity of young people to establish and maintain positive relationships with caring adults and supportive peers. The necessity of these relationships to social and emotional well-being and lifelong success in school, community, and at home cannot be overstated and should be integral to all interventions with vulnerable children and youth. Additionally, building these skills and capacities through the implementation of effective interventions will ready children, youth, and families for positive permanency outcomes.

An important component of promoting social and emotional well-being includes addressing the impact of trauma, which can have a profound effect on the overall functioning of children and youth. ACYF promotes a trauma-informed approach, which involves understanding and responding to the symptoms of chronic interpersonal trauma and traumatic stress across the domains outlined above, as well as the behavioral and mental health sequelae of trauma.

ACYF anticipates a continued focus on social and emotional well-being as a critical component of its overall mission to ensure the safety, permanency, and well-being of children.

### **The Children's Bureau**

Within ACYF, the Children's Bureau (CB) plans, manages, coordinates, and supports child abuse and neglect prevention and child welfare services programs. CB is the agency within the Federal Government

that is responsible for assisting CW systems by promoting continuous improvement in the delivery of CW services. CB programs are designed to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of all children, including those in foster care, available for adoption, recently adopted, abused, neglected, dependent, disabled, or homeless, and to prevent the neglect, abuse, and exploitation of children.

The purpose of CB programs is to promote strengthening of the family unit in order to help prevent the unnecessary separation of children from their families and encourage reunifying families, when possible, if separation has occurred. State and tribal child welfare systems are designed to deliver direct services that protect children who have suffered maltreatment, who are at risk for maltreatment, or who are under the care and placement responsibility of the State and/or tribe because their families are unable to care for them. These systems also focus on securing permanent legal placement with families, such as reunification, guardianship, and adoption for children and youth who are unable to return home.

Information about CB programs can be found at: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb>

### **Family Connection Grants Program**

The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub. L. § 110-351) authorizes the Secretary to award competitive, matching grants to State, local, or tribal child welfare agencies and private nonprofit organizations that have experience in working with foster children or children in kinship care arrangements for the purposes of helping children who are in, or are at risk of entering, foster care reconnect with family members. On September 30, 2009, CB awarded a cluster of 24 Family Connection grants, for a 36-month project period, to initiate or expand programs in one, or any combination of, the four program areas identified in the funding legislation: Kinship Navigation, Family-finding, Family Group Decision-Making, and Residential Family Treatment. A listing of the 2009 funded projects is available at:

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs\\_fund/discretionary/2009.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs_fund/discretionary/2009.htm)

Further, on September 30, 2011, seven projects were funded for a 36-month project period to test the effectiveness of Family Group Decision-making (FGDM) as a family-centered service approach that helps prevent children and youth from entering or re-entering foster care, thereby reducing the time that these children and families are involved with the child welfare system. A listing of the 2011 funded projects is available at: [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs\\_fund/discretionary/2011.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs_fund/discretionary/2011.htm)

The National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections, a service of CB, disseminates information on Family Connection grant projects, including project abstracts with contact information, and Year 2 Cross-site Evaluation Reports and presentations related to the 2009 Family Connection grantees.

## **COLLABORATIVE APPROACHES**

### **Kinship Navigator Programs**

#### **Purpose and Description**

Under the provisions of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008, Pub. L. § 110-351, section 427(a)(1) of the Social Security Act, grants are authorized for KN programs to assist kinship caregivers in learning about, finding, and using programs and services to meet the needs of the children they are raising and their own needs, and to promote effective partnerships among public and private agencies to ensure kinship caregiver families are served.

#### **Need and Rationale**

The National Survey of America's Families (Urban Institute) and the U.S. Census indicate substantial growth in the number of children living with relatives other than their parents. The Census Bureau's Current Population Survey produces annual data that includes the number of children living in relative households without a parent present. The most recent figure (for 2011) was 2.3 million children. Of these, 1.64 million live with grandparents, and 694,000 live with other relatives (U.S. Census, 2011).

According to the latest statistics available from the 2005-2009 American Community Survey (ACS) data,

about 2.7 million children live with grandparent householders who are "responsible for most of the basic needs" of the children and over 960,000 children live with grandparent householders and the children's parents are not present in the home.

Almost 104,000 children are in foster care with relatives, which represents about 26 percent of all children in foster care. These data may be found in HHS, ACF, CB AFCARS Report, Preliminary FY 2010 Estimates as of June 2011, available at:

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats\\_research/afcars/tar/report18.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/tar/report18.htm)

A study by the Urban Institute in 2002, reported that of the approximately 2.3 million children living in kinship care, there were

- Approximately 1.76 million in "private kinship care" or "informal kinship care," a placement arranged by the family without the involvement of a CW agency; and
- Approximately 140,000 in "voluntary kinship care," where a social service agency helped place the child, but the court was not involved.

Grandparent caregivers mainly assume the roles of parents because of situations related to the biological parents. The parental situations that commonly lead the grandparents to take up the care responsibilities of their grandchildren are child abuse or neglect, death, abandonment, mental illness, substance abuse, and incarceration (Sands & Goldberg-Glen, 2000).

Kinship care, in its various forms, has become increasingly important in meeting the needs of children involved in the CW system or at risk of becoming involved in the CW system. Private kinship care and voluntary kinship care arrangements prevent large numbers of children and youth from entering the formal CW system. When the system does become involved and determines that children must be removed from the home of their birth parents, Federal and State law and policy encourage placement of those children with relatives where they can maintain their family and cultural ties. Information about the different types of kinship care is available from the Child Welfare Information Gateway, a service of CB:

[http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f\\_kinshi/f\\_kinshi1.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/f_kinshi/f_kinshi1.cfm).

The Federal Child and Family Services Reviews (CFSRs) acknowledge the importance of ensuring that children and youth have permanency and stability in their living situations and that the continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for them in kinship care.

While playing such an important role in ensuring the safety and healthy development of children and youth, kinship caregivers often experience hardships that can impact the well-being of the family and affect the sustainability and quality of the child's placement. Caregivers may face a variety of unnecessary barriers, including difficulties enrolling children in school, accessing and authorizing medical treatment, maintaining public housing leases, obtaining affordable legal service, and accessing a variety of Federal benefits and services.

Billings (et al., 2002) and Leder (et al, 2003) conclude that children in kinship care are at increased risk compared to children living with their parents for emotional problems and behavioral disorders including attention deficit disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and other psychiatric developmental delays and anxiety disorders (Fergusson et al., 2008; Pinson-Millburn et al., 1996). Sawyer and Dubowitz's (1994) study of school age children in kinship care reported substantial health care needs including a number of undetected problems (e.g. failed vision and hearing screens) at higher rates than children in foster care.

According to an Urban Institute publication, *Kinship Foster Care: An Ongoing, Yet Largely Uninformed Debate*, by Rob Geen, more than half of the children in kinship care live with families whose incomes are below 200 percent of the Federal poverty level. Because kinship foster homes often do not meet State foster care licensing standards, many kinship caregivers receive lower monthly benefits than licensed foster parents in the general population. Caregiver difficulty in utilizing services is typically attributed to issues of availability, access, knowledge, ability to pay, caregiver health (Harrison, 2000). Despite often



having a greater need, kinship caregivers request fewer services, are offered fewer services, and receive fewer services than licensed foster parents (Geen, 2003).

In many cases, kinship caregivers could and would access services if they received greater assistance in navigating the complex array of programs and services available to them. A study of 74 caregivers that received kinship liaison services in Clark County, Nevada, reported that the most frequent support activity requested by caregivers was an explanation of caregiver rights and responsibilities, followed by information and referrals, explanation of permanency options, educational materials and foster care licensure training information (Denby, 2010).

Since 2001, a number of States have set up kinship navigator programs. While varying in the type and number of services they provide, all recognize the importance of helping kinship caregivers obtain services, and most mandate the dissemination of information about services such as TANF and health, legal, judicial, and educational services. This dissemination is accomplished through toll-free hotlines and employment of kinship navigators (people who provide kinship caregivers with information and referral services and assistance in identifying and accessing needed services and resources). Kinship navigators guide families toward and connect them to existing benefits programs, local support groups, child care and respite care programs, training related to caring for special needs children, legal services, and other helpful government and non-profit services. These programs also publish materials and offer helpful web sites to share key information about services and resources. KN programs offer a "one stop shop" for caregivers seeking accurate and up-to-date information about the benefits, services, supports, and programs available to kinship caregivers in their respective States.

Information on KN programs is available from The Child Welfare Information Gateway, a service of CB, at: <http://www.childwelfare.gov/famcentered/services/kinship.cfm>.

### **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families**

In 1996, Pub.L. 104-193, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (PWRORA) replaced the welfare programs known as Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the Job Opportunities and Basic Skills Training (JOBS) program and the Emergency Assistance (EA) program with the TANF program. The law ended Federal entitlement to assistance and instead created TANF as a block grant that provides Federal funds to States, territories, and tribes (hereafter, jurisdictions) each year. These funds cover benefits, administrative expenses, and services targeted to needy families. Jurisdictions receive the TANF block grant to design and operate their programs, and have a wide range of activities that can be funded to support the needs of children and families.

Information about TANF is available at: [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/OFA/](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/OFA/)

Almost half the cases in TANF are child-only cases, where there is no adult included in the assistance unit. While in many child-only cases, the child still lives with his/her parent (i.e., parent is ineligible for TANF assistance), a non-parental case is when a parent is not living in the home of a caregiver who is receiving a TANF assistance payment on behalf of the child only. Only the receipt of TANF cash assistance would put a family on the TANF caseload. A child-only case is only for families receiving TANF assistance, not those that are only receiving supportive services paid by TANF. For example, if a child was living with his aunt, and TANF pays for family counseling, but the family is not receiving a TANF payment, then they are not included in the number of child-only cases. Examples of what child welfare services TANF can pay for can be found by searching for "Child Welfare" at:

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/resources/funding\\_guide.htm](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ofa/resources/funding_guide.htm)

Gibbs, Kasten, Bir, Duncan, & Hoover (2006) report that children and families who are receiving a TANF child-only payment have extensive service needs. Parents may be unable to care for the child (generally due to serious problems) and the child is residing with the caregiver as a result of involvement in CW services or a prevention strategy to avoid the child's involvement in the foster care or CW system.

Approximately 41 percent of child-only cases are non-parental (Golden & Hawkins, 2011). Jurisdictions



have a great deal of flexibility in how they design not only their CW system but also their TANF system. How the two systems interact on the State and local level is a complicated question and their impact on kin families is also largely unknown. Some jurisdictions have more non-parental cases than others, probably due to differences in eligibility and services available to children and caregivers in the CW system. However, about two-thirds of children in a non-parental TANF child-only case are living with a grandparent (Golden & Hawkins, 2011). In one study in the States of Tennessee and North Carolina, many of these caregivers reported having health issues and other problems that may limit their ability to care for the child in the long-term (Golden & Hawkins, 2011).

TANF child-only payments for children remain one of the most viable ways, besides formal foster care payments, that children can be placed with a relative with continued financial support. Some kinship caregivers may only need financial support (including the ability to receive Medicaid for the child) to provide for the safety and well-being of the child. (The availability of Medicaid to a child in a TANF child-only case may vary by State and other requirements.) Many caregivers, however, need services to ensure the permanency and stability of the placement and prevent the child from being placed into foster care.

In addition to accurate information on what services they are eligible for under the State's TANF program, including easy-to-understand requirements for TANF child-only payments, many caregivers also need information or referrals to services to support the long-term well-being of the child/youth within their home. TANF agencies are usually not equipped to provide extensive services, or even referrals, to help caregivers to meet the unique social, emotional, and educational needs of children who have experienced trauma. While many TANF agencies have a more expansive mission in terms of serving families, some TANF agencies still have a culture where TANF workers have the primary role of determining eligibility. Additionally, while many child welfare agencies consider the presence of a TANF child-only payment as the critical service to be provided to a child, there is a growing awareness that the targeting and coordination of services for kinship caregiver families between the TANF and CW agencies is a critical prevention strategy for families.

Jurisdictions have varying TANF policies and programs, including eligibility requirements, amount and length of cash assistance, and any other support services available to kinship caregivers. Some jurisdictions offer programs that are short-term, non-recurring benefits, often referred to as "NRST" programs. A few examples of State TANF policies that are addressing the needs of kinship caregivers are:

- Georgia has an NRST called Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Crisis Intervention Payment (GRG CRISP). This benefit is for grandparents receiving TANF cash assistance for their grandchildren, and are disabled or 60 years of age or older, and are not receiving a foster care per diem in addition to having gross household income that is less than 160 percent of the Federal poverty level for their household size. The GRG CRISP is designed to meet an emergency need of a grandparent who is raising a grandchild in his/her home. It is a one-time cash payment equivalent to three times the maximum cash benefit for the assistance unit. The CRISP can be approved at any time during the grandparent's TANF eligibility when an emergency exists. (The CRISP provides cash assistance to help a grandparent pay the cost of emergency needs, such as shelter, utilities, school expenses, furniture, or legal expenses associated with gaining formal custody, and other additional expenses incurred when a grandchild comes to live with the grandparent);
- New Jersey has an NRST called the Kinship Wraparound Program. This provides benefits for relative caregivers, such as grandparents, aunts, siblings. A maximum of \$1,000 is provided once or twice in a calendar period to assist relative caregivers with needs of the children such as clothes, camp, or computers;
- Texas has a one-time grandparents' grant issued by the TANF agency to grandparents who meet certain eligibility requirements for the support of a dependent child called the "Relative Caregiver Reimbursement Program." The supplemental payment is not to exceed \$1,000 and is intended to help the grandparent with initial costs and provides support services and limited financial assistance

for eligible caregivers who assume caregiving responsibility for children placed with the CW agency.

The service needs of children placed with relatives, with or without a TANF child-only payment, may be very similar to children in foster care (Gibbs et. al, 2005). Like children in foster care, children in kinship care are not living with a biological parent; this is a significant risk factor. Children in foster care and in kinship placements are also likely to have experienced trauma and to need similar services to help the child/youth to heal and recover from the trauma and continue on a trajectory of normal development.

In addition to services to meet the needs of the children in their care, many kinship caregivers may themselves be in need of referrals to services due to health, mental health, or other issues related to income or caregiver age. The National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (NSCAW) is a national, longitudinal study of children who come to the attention of the CW system. The study provides potentially useful descriptive information related to the needs of caregivers, including those receiving or eligible to receive TANF child-only payments, and the types of referrals necessary to meet those needs. NSCAW I began in 1999, and was the first data collection of its type to examine the characteristics and outcomes of a nationally representative sample of children and families who were the subject of a CW investigation. NSCAW II was launched in 2008 with a new cohort of children. Two NSCAW II reports from the baseline data collection wave - *"Children's Services"* and *"Caregiver Health and Services"* - provide data for children in different types of placements that are useful in planning the collaboration of CW and TANF in kinship navigation programs:

- Formal kin care, which includes living situations where the primary caregiver has a kin relationship to the child and where the caregiver is receiving payments from the CW system (Note: Relatives were asked to report on their understanding and may not know where the payment originates. Therefore, families in "formal kin care" may be receiving a TANF child-only payment and may believe it is a CW payment);
- Informal kin care, which includes a primary caregiver with a kin relationship to the child, but who is not receiving payments from the CW system;
- Foster Care, which indicates that the child's primary caregiver was identified as a foster care placement.

For example, Ringeisen et al (2011) show in Exhibit IV-17, "Special Education Services Use and Risk of Behavioral/Emotional Cognitive Problems Among Children 6 to 17 Years Old," that children in informal kin care have about the same rates of risk for behavioral/emotional or cognitive problems as children in foster care, but are significantly less likely to have an individualized education plan (IEP) than children in foster care (Ringeisen, Casanueva, Smith, & Dolan, 2011, p. 49). There may be several reasons why children in informal kin care do not have IEPs, for example, the caregiver does not have legal authority to act as the legal guardian for the child in educational settings.

Understanding the significance of this type of information is important for collaborative kinship navigator planning between CW and TANF programs. When accomplished at the time of TANF eligibility screening, identification of service needs and assistance in accessing targeted services can play an important role in preventing entry or re-entry into foster care of children/youth. Support services provided through kinship navigation services could help prevent the child and caregiver from experiencing an initial maltreatment report to the CW system. The risk associated with a behavioral/emotional problem and the lack of services may contribute to the situation for which the caregiver has been brought to the attention of the CW agency (and thus sampled in the NSCAW). The behavioral issue may reflect that the child or youth is not receiving services that might be offered through the CW system if he/she were living with a formal kin caregiver or in foster care.

As mentioned before, there is strong evidence to suggest that kinship caregivers are usually older and may have health issues (Fergusson, E., Maughan, B., & Golding, J. (2008). Behavioral issues and other additional stressors from the care of a child/youth can exacerbate health issues of a caregiver and

ultimately impact the safety, permanency, and well-being of the child/youth. Critical information can be gleaned from the NSCAW II Baseline report on the characteristics of kinship caregivers, which can inform KN program referrals to services and supports and considerations of how the type of caregiver (informal vs. formal, age/ role in the family) impacts the services they are likely to access and the types of referrals most likely to be needed. For example, outreach to eligible TANF child-only caregivers may be critical to caregivers of a certain age or poverty demographics.

In another example, NSCAW II Baseline data suggests that 71 percent of children in formal kinship care have had dental care in the past year while only 54 percent of children in informal care have had a dental visit. Therefore, referral to dental services that can meet the needs of children in informal kinship care may be a critical need in the community to promote the health and well-being of children. Targeting services that caregivers and children/youth might not be likely to receive is critical to the improvement of the well-being of children.

Information on NSCAW I and NSCAW II is available at:

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/abuse\\_neglect/nscaw/index.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/abuse_neglect/nscaw/index.html)

Furthermore, often relatives may prefer to continue to care for children within the framework of subsidized guardianship or long-term relative care. Certain assumptions by the CW agency may also facilitate children being placed in relative care over formal adoption. There are several factors that should be considered that suggest that adoption by relatives may improve child well-being (Radel, Bramlett, and Waters, 2010). For example, kinship caregivers who commit to adoption may signal that they have come to terms with the importance of providing a long-term caregiving role to the child. Adoption of children by kinship caregivers may also affect parenting because the role is more permanent than legal guardianship. Legal guardianship as a national Federal option became available under the Fostering Connection to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008. However, the complex interplay between kinship guardianship, adoption, and TANF child-only payments is largely unstudied. Data to support interventions which promote the best permanency options and well-being of families continues to be unknown. Services to educate relatives about the benefits of both guardianship and adoption may be important in States who have a guardianship option. Information on which States have been approved for the Federal Guardianship program is available at: [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs\\_fund/index.htm#state](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs_fund/index.htm#state)

As noted before, the "role" of the TANF agency may not be seen as one that discusses permanency with families that present for benefits. However, conversations of "permanency" with kinship caregivers receiving TANF may help to determine the best long-term plan for the child and lead to provision of needed services, or referrals to services, to facilitate the healing and recovery of a child who cannot live with a biological family member. The collaboration of the CW and TANF agencies in KN programs can help to create a joint workforce which is competent to engage with families in a more meaningful way. This collaboration can facilitate effective service delivery centered on supporting kinship caregivers with the resources and skills needed to care for children/youth long-term and promote their well-being.

## **PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

### **Tips for Preparing a Competitive Application**

It is essential that applicants read the entire announcement package carefully before preparing an application and include all of the required application forms and attachments. The application must reflect a thorough understanding of and support the purpose and objectives of the applicable legislation. Reviewers expect applicants to understand the goals of the legislation and CB's interest in each topic, and to address and follow all of the evaluation criteria in ways that demonstrate this understanding. Applications that do not clearly address the evaluation criteria or program requirements generally receive very low scores and are rarely funded.

CB's web site (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb>) provides a wide range of information and links to other relevant web sites. Before preparing an application, applicants can learn more about CB's mission and programs by exploring the web site.

NOTE: See *Section IV.2, The Project Description, Approach and Evaluation* for additional instructions for applicants.

## **Project Requirements**

Projects funded under this FOA will:

- Utilize CW/TANF program collaboration to develop and implement KN programs as a component of a strong system of services to support family connections;
- Demonstrate effectiveness of KN programs to effectively engage kinship caregivers with needed services and interventions to promote protective factors as a means to foster well-being and support healthy, positive functioning in children, youth, and families served or potentially served by the CW and TANF systems; with the goal of assisting caregivers to achieve and sustain permanency for the children in their care.
- Establish identifiable demonstration sites that other States/locales seeking to implement KN services for this population can look to for guidance, insight, and possible replication;
- Conduct a rigorous evaluation of the project; and
- Disseminate information regarding the knowledge developed by the project.

Grant projects will be implemented through strong collaboration between the grantee; the public CW agency if the grantee is a private, non-profit organization; and the agency administering the TANF program. As prescribed by the authorizing legislation, the KN programs will:

- Assist kinship caregivers in learning about, finding, and using programs and services to meet the needs of the children they are raising and their own needs; and
- Promote effective partnerships among public and private agencies to ensure kinship caregiver families are served.

Projects will develop and implement collaborative KN programs based on a current assessment of the needs of kinship caregiver families in the geographic area to be served by the project. This assessment will address kinship families that are being served by the CW agency and/or the TANF agency, as well as kinship families that are not currently connected to either system, but that could potentially qualify for services and supports from these agencies or from other service providers. The assessment may include information from focus groups and interviews, and input from kinship families.

The CW and TANF agencies will collaborate on project activities to provide referrals to the KN program and to ensure that Kinship Navigators are aware of the array of services available by both agencies. Project activities will focus on identifying and accessing effective, targeted services and supports for kinship caregiver families to meet needs identified in the assessment. The program and evaluation designs will use data from their CW and TANF agencies and other sources, as appropriate, to identify the size, characteristics, and needs of the target population, and to show how those have informed the development of the proposed KN intervention and services to be targeted to improve the well-being of children, youth, and families.

At a minimum, projects must address target populations that include both kinship families served by CW agencies and those served or potentially served by TANF agencies. In addition, projects may provide:

- KN services for caregivers who are not known to the CW or TANF agencies, where children have been informally placed with relatives; and/or
- More intensive KN services to help caregivers of children who are identified as being at risk of entering or re-entering foster care.

Projects will serve kinship caregivers who:

- Assume legal guardianship for children formerly in foster care;
- Care for children in foster care;
- Care for children who have had prior CW/Child Protective Services involvement, but are not

- involved in the foster care system; and/or
- Care for children who are identified as being at risk of entering or re-entering foster care.

Kinship caregivers served by these projects may:

- Receive a TANF child-only assistance benefit;
- Be potentially eligible for services by TANF agencies; or
- Care for children who are not known to the CW or TANF agencies, where children have been informally placed with relatives.

The projects will:

- Establish information and referral systems including those that provide 2-1-1 or 3-1-1 information systems where available that link (via toll-free access or online) kinship caregivers, kinship support group facilitators, and kinship service providers with needed information and services;

Note: KN programs under this FOA shall link to, but not directly provide, needed services for kinship caregivers, including legal or health assistance. Projects may provide auxiliary services, such as transportation, to facilitate access to needed services, and may facilitate forums and support groups for caregivers, for the purpose of exchange of information about these services and to provide mutual support in accessing them;

- Use a range of methods for outreach to kinship caregivers and coordination of services that reflect identified needs and characteristics of the target population and the community in order to facilitate caregiver participation in the KN program;
- Establish and implement a screening assessment process to determine caregivers' eligibility and gather data on the needs of kinship caregivers and their families;
- Follow up to ensure that kinship caregivers and their families have obtained the appropriate referrals and services from public, private, community, or faith-based agencies to address the family's identified needs;
- Identify and address challenges for kinship caregiver families in identifying and accessing needed services in the targeted service area; and
- Use partnerships between public and private agencies, including schools, community based or faith-based organizations, and relevant government agencies, for the purpose of increasing knowledge/awareness of kinship needs, program development and service provision.

In addition, collaborative KN projects may:

- Establish and support a kinship care ombudsman with authority to intervene and help kinship caregivers access services;
- Support other activities designed to assist caregivers in obtaining benefits and services to improve their caregiving, such as co-location of service providers to ensure that caregivers receive information and referrals that enable them to obtain appropriate, timely and efficient services.

Projects funded under this FOA must allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director, the evaluator, and key partners, including the local or State CW agency partner if the applicant is a private, non-profit organization, to travel to Washington, DC, to attend a Kick-off Meeting for funded grantees to be held within the first 3 months of the project (first year only), and the 3-day Annual Grantees Meeting, usually held in the spring.

The use of grant funds for project activities may not be to supplant or augment any other funding, and must be allowable under this FOA. Refer to *Section IV.5. Funding Restrictions* for further information.

## Evaluation

For further information regarding CB expectations of applicants' plans for evaluation activities, refer to *Section Section IV. 2, The Project Description, Outcomes Expected and Evaluation*. Reviewers will be assessing applicants' plans based on criteria related to the proposed evaluation plan listed in *Section V.*,

### *Application Review Information, V.1, Criteria.*

CB expects grantees to engage in a strong, local evaluation in order to build evidence regarding best/promising practices and demonstrate linkages between project activities and improved outcomes at the parent/child/family and organization/system levels. Using the most rigorous design possible, evaluations will show whether the CW/TANF collaborative approach improves the ability of kinship caregivers to identify and access the services and supports necessary to meet their own needs and facilitate the safety, permanency, and well-being of the children and youth in their care.

In addition, the evaluation will address organizational aspects of collaboration, such as the level of active participation by partners in planning, implementation and evaluation activities; the effectiveness of strategies to support collaboration, such as co-location, joint training, and shared communication/dissemination mechanisms; and the impact of organizational policies and procedures, such as those that facilitate data sharing, which support collaborative KN activities. The evaluation design will identify linkages between collaborative CW/TANF activities and effective KN services for the target population.

Guided by a logic model and theory of change for the project, the local evaluation will include both process and outcomes evaluation components. The process evaluation will assess the implementation of the project, as well as the linkages between the collaborative partners that will help ensure that identified needs of children, youth, and families are met. The outcomes component will use a sufficiently rigorous approach to examine how the approaches used in this demonstration project affect key outcomes of interest, including permanency indicators and child and family well-being indicators.

Grantees are required to rigorously evaluate their projects. Rigorous research incorporates the four following criteria (Proctor, et al., 2010):

**Credibility:** Ensuring what is intended to be evaluated is actually what is being evaluated; making sure that descriptions of the phenomena or experience being studied are accurate and recognizable to others; ensuring that the method used is the most definitive and compelling approach that is available and feasible for the question being addressed. If conclusions about program efficacy are being examined, the study design should include a comparison group (i.e., randomized control trial or quasi-experimental design); see the HomVEE website for standards for study design in estimating program impacts: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/homvee>).

**Applicability:** Generalizability of findings beyond current project (i.e., when findings "fit" into contexts outside the study situation). Ensuring the population being studied represents one or more of the population being served by the program.

**Consistency:** Consistently following and clearly describing processes and methods, so that someone else could replicate the approach and other studies can confirm what is found.

**Neutrality:** Producing results that are as objective as possible and acknowledge the bias brought to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the results.

Demonstration grant projects funded by CB are expected to add to the evidence-base of what works in the field of child welfare. By definition, KN projects funded under this announcement are not intended to provide the services needed by kinship families to improve their caregiving, but rather to assist them to identify and access those services. In addition, projects will support the increased knowledge of what works to build the collaborative capacity of the CW and TANF agencies to support the well-being of children within the range of kinship arrangements. In order to determine what works, grantees are expected to devote a substantial amount of resources to the collection of data for evaluation purposes, and the evaluation of the impact of CW/TANF collaborative KN strategies on outcomes for children, youth and families being served.

The evaluation must identify and address outcomes related to the needed services that families accessed as a result of participation in the KN program, which were intended to promote protective factors as a means

to foster well-being and support healthy, positive functioning.

The plan will utilize appropriate evaluation measures. Some examples of measures of family needs and well-being used by previous KN grantees, include:

- Family Needs Scale (FNS);
- Family Strengths Scale;
- Medical Outcomes Study (MOS) Social Support Scale;
- Parental Stress Index (PSI);
- Stress Index for Parents of Adolescents (SIPA);
- Caregiver Health Survey; and
- Pediatric Quality of Life for Parents, Pediatric Quality of Life for Children (PedsQL).

Grantees will be responsible for collecting and reporting detailed information about their screening and referral protocols, as well as data about the adoption, fidelity, and effectiveness of collaborative KN services. CB is particularly interested in:

- Factors and strategies associated with successful implementation;
- Organizational and system conditions necessary to support successful adoption and implementation of CW/TANF collaborative KN programs; and
- Cost of implementation and ongoing service delivery.

Given the scarce resources available for child welfare programs and the push to establish cost efficiency measures, programs funded under this FOA are expected to conduct a cost analysis that will provide policymakers with the information they need to make more thoughtful decisions about resource allocation in their communities.

A grantee may choose to partner with an internal or external evaluator for the local evaluation. External evaluators from different types of organizations may be suited to this project, including university professors or university-based teams, independent consultants, or research/consulting firms. The local evaluators, defined as an individual, team, or an organization such as a university or evaluation contractor, must have the staff qualifications and organizational capacity to implement a rigorous evaluation of a project of this type within the project period.

Helpful information on evaluation for program managers may be found in a document titled "Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation", which can be accessed at:

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/other\\_resrch/pm\\_guide\\_eval/index.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/other_resrch/pm_guide_eval/index.html)

## **Dissemination**

For further information regarding CB expectations of applicants' plans for dissemination, refer to *Section IV. 2, The Project Description, Approach, Evaluation, and Budget and Budget Justification*.

CB expects that information and knowledge generated by these grant projects will be shared with the broad child welfare field, and efforts will be made to integrate project knowledge into policy and practice. Grantees will be expected to disseminate strategically and effectively, so their project information and knowledge is received by key target audiences and used as intended to achieve identified dissemination goals. This will include both individual project dissemination of individual project products and findings and cluster dissemination of cross-cluster products and findings.

Grantees will be expected to work throughout their projects with Federal Project Officers, the CB Training and Technical Assistance Network, and other grantees in the cluster to:

- Finalize individual and cluster-wide dissemination goals and plans;
- Identify and engage with target audiences for dissemination;
- Produce detailed procedures, materials, and other products based on the program evaluation; and
- Develop and disseminate, at appropriate times, summarized/synthesized information about the project.



## **Collaboration**

For further information regarding CB expectations of applicants' plans for collaboration, refer to *Section IV. 2, The Project Description, Approach and Evaluation*.

If the grantee lead agency responsible for administering the grant is a non-profit organization, the grantee must demonstrate a strong partnership with the public CW agency(ies) with responsibility for administering the CW program(s) in the targeted geographical area(s) and the TANF agency(ies) with responsibility for administering the TANF program(s) in the targeted geographical area(s).

This CW/TANF collaboration, as well as partnerships with public, private, community, or faith-based agencies, will be reflected in a project management plan which supports collaboration components and activities, including data sharing, and enables the proposed project to build on any previous accomplishments of the collaboration.

## **Demonstration Projects**

Activities funded under this FOA are demonstration projects. At CB, a demonstration project is one that puts into place and tests new, unique, or distinctive approaches for delivering services to a specific population.

Demonstration projects may test whether a program or service that has proven successful in one location or setting can work in a different context. Demonstration projects may test a theory, idea, or method that reflects a new and different way of thinking about service delivery. Demonstration projects may be designed to address the needs of a very specific group of clients or focus on one service component available to all clients. The scope of these projects may be broad and comprehensive or narrow and targeted to specific populations. A demonstration project must:

- Develop and implement an evidence-informed model with specific components or strategies that are based on theory, research, or evaluation data; or replicate or test the transferability of successfully evaluated program models;
- Determine the effectiveness, costs, and benefits of the model and its components or strategies using a rigorous evaluation approach;
- Disseminate strategically and effectively collaborate with other projects in the grant cluster to establish goals; identify and engage with target audiences; produce detailed procedures, materials, and other products, based on the programs evaluations; and disseminate information about project activities, products and findings; and
- Contribute to the evidence base on strategies, practices, and programs that may be used to guide replication, program improvements, systems change, or testing in other settings.

## **Working with Other CB Discretionary Grant Projects**

CB currently funds approximately 300 discretionary grants projects in over 50 different program areas. Through their work with a broad spectrum of populations within the child welfare arena, discretionary grantees develop a wealth of knowledge across numerous program areas. Applicants are strongly encouraged to utilize the knowledge being developed by CB discretionary research and demonstration projects, including current Family Connection grant projects, when developing proposals in response to this FOA.

For more information on CB discretionary grant programs, please see:

[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs\\_fund/index.htm#disc](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/programs_fund/index.htm#disc) and

[http://library.childwelfare.gov/cbgrants/ws/library/docs/cb\\_grants/GrantHome](http://library.childwelfare.gov/cbgrants/ws/library/docs/cb_grants/GrantHome).

Information on the funded Family Connection grant projects can be found at the National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections.

## **Additional Project Requirements**

The applicant's signature on the application constitutes its assurance that it will comply with the requirements stated in *Section IV.2, Additional Assurances and Certifications*.

### **Use of Funds**

Grantees must adhere to the Funding Restrictions as noted in *Section IV.5, Funding Restrictions*.

### **Non-Supplanting and Augmentation**

Grantees may not augment their current federally funded programs from outside sources without specific statutory authority. When Congress makes an appropriation, it establishes an authorized funding level for that program. To permit an agency to operate beyond this level, with funds derived from some other source without specific congressional sanction, would amount to a usurpation of the congressional prerogative. For example, a grantee that is funded under one appropriation may not simply modify their current Federal project or propose to increase their number of participants under a different appropriation.

NOTE: See *Section IV.2. The Project Description, Approach*, for additional instructions for the applicants.

### **DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this FOA, the following alphabetical list of definitions of relevant terms is provided:

**Caregiver:** Relative, kin, or fictive kin serving in the parental role in a kinship care living arrangement, providing full-time care for the child/youth.

**Caregiver Family:** Child/youth, caregiver(s), other immediate members of the family constellation and fictive-kin in a kinship care living arrangement.

**Child Well-being:** Although the child welfare field has not adopted a uniform definition of child well-being, ACYF conceptualizes overall well-being as encompassing competent and developmentally appropriate functioning across a number of domains. The broad domains include behavioral and emotional functioning, social functioning, cognitive and academic functioning, physical health and development, and mental health. Multiple aspects of functioning may be observed within each of these domains (for example, self regulation skills may be one indicator of behavioral functioning). Further, aspects of competent functioning within a given domain are expected to vary according to the age or developmental status of the child or youth. Child well-being across these domains may be influenced by contextual factors both external and internal to the child, including environmental supports and personal characteristics such as temperament and abilities. These contextual factors (intermediate outcomes) may function as either risk or protective factors for the child.

**Family:** Birth or adoptive parents, extended family members and other relatives, as well as friends, neighbors, and others who may not be related by blood or marriage, but who play an important, positive role in the life of the child/youth and are considered to be part of the family.

**Family-centered Practice:** Service approaches designed to:

- Strengthen and empower families to protect and nurture their children, safely preserve family relationships and connections when appropriate, recognize the strong influence social systems have on individual behavior, and enhance family autonomy;
- Respect the rights, values, and cultures of families;
- Focus on the entire family rather than selected individuals within a family; and
- Promote protective factors and reduce risk factors for child maltreatment at the individual, family, community, and societal levels.

**Fictive Kin:** Persons not related by blood or marriage but who have a strong, positive emotional tie with the child/youth, and play a positive role in the life of the child/youth, such as godparents, neighbors, family friends, school staff, coaches, or a member of the tribe.

**Foster Care:** The child/youth is in the placement and care responsibility of the CW agency. The

child/youth is placed to live with licensed foster parents who may be kin, and a maintenance payment is provided for them.

**Guardianship:** Relative caregivers assume long-term, permanent, physical, and legal custody of the child/youth in their care. In some States, guardians may receive a subsidized guardianship payment to assist them in caring for children.

**Kin:** Extended family members and other relatives of the child/youth by blood or marriage, as well as fictive kin.

**Kinship Care:** An arrangement where a child/youth lives full-time with and is being raised by a relative, without a parent being present. The living arrangement may be subsidized or unsubsidized. Kinship Care may include physical or legal custody of the child.

- **Legal custody** refers to the legal right to make decisions about the children, such as where they live. Parents have legal custody of their children unless they voluntarily give custody to someone else (e.g., the parent is sent overseas) or a court takes this right away and gives it to someone else;
- **Physical custody** refers to where the child lives.

The different types of kinship care are:

- **Formal kinship care** refers to cases in which the children are placed in the legal custody of the State by a judge, and the CW system then places the children with grandparents or other kin. In these situations, the CW agency, acting on behalf of the State, has legal custody and must answer to the court, but the kin have physical custody;
- **Voluntary kinship care** refers to situations in which the children live with relatives and the CW system is involved, but the State does not take legal custody. In some cases, children have been placed with relatives by a court, and in other cases an arrangement is made by the CW agency with no court involvement (Ehrle, Geen, & Main's, 2003);
- **Informal kinship care** sometimes known as "private kinship care" refers to arrangements made by the parents and other family members without any involvement from either the CW system or the juvenile court system. A parent may leave children with a grandparent while he or she is sent overseas, or an aunt may care for nephews whose parents are ill or otherwise unable to care for them.

**Permanency:** A nurturing relationship between a child/youth and a caretaking adult which builds emotional ties that are sufficient to maintain the continuity of the relationship throughout the life of the child/youth.

- Permanency options for the child/youth encompass a range of living arrangements through reunification with biological family, adoption, long-term placement with a relative, or another legal plan such as guardianship (Gibbs et al., 2006. Fig 1. Pathways to kinship care.);
- Family members also support permanency in ways other than caregiver roles by providing the child/youth with emotional connections that support their well-being.

**Protective Factors:** Conditions in families and communities that, when present, increase the likelihood of improved functioning and well-being of children, youth, and families. These attributes serve as buffers, helping parents and family members to find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively, even under stress.

**Relative:** A person, other than the child's parent, who is related to the child through blood, marriage/civil union/domestic partnership, or adoption (including a step-parent), or a person who is connected to a child or the child's parent by an established positive psychological or emotional relationship.

**Risk Factors:** Attributes commonly associated with maltreatment. Children/youth in families and environments where these factors exist have a higher probability of experiencing maltreatment.

**Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF):** Program authorized by the Personal Responsibility

and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996; provides assistance and work opportunities to needy families by granting jurisdictions Federal funds and wide flexibility to develop and implement their own welfare programs.

- **TANF Child-only Payment:** Although an adult/parent lives in the home, there is no adult included in the assistance unit;
- **Non-parental Case:** When a parent is not living in the home of a caregiver who is receiving a TANF assistance payment on behalf of the child only.

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## II. Award Information

Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Total Funding:	\$5,000,000
Expected Number of Awards:	7
Award Ceiling:	\$750,000 Per Budget Period
Award Floor:	\$550,000 Per Budget Period
Average Projected Award Amount:	\$750,000 Per Budget Period

### Length of Project Periods:

36-month project with three 12-month budget periods

### Additional Information on Awards:

Awards made under this announcement are subject to the availability of Federal funds.

Applications requesting an award amount that exceeds the *Award Ceiling* per budget period or per project period, as stated in this section, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period. Please see *Section III.3.*

*Application Disqualification Factors.*

**Note:** For those programs that require matching or cost sharing, grantees will be held accountable for projected commitments of non-Federal resources in their application budgets and budget justifications, even if the projected commitment exceeds the required amount of match or cost share. A grantee's failure to provide the required matching amount will result in the disallowance of Federal funds.

Continuation grant applications will be considered on a non-competitive basis and are subject to the satisfactory progress of the grantee, availability of funds, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Federal Government. Grants will be awarded for one-year budget periods throughout the project.

### Description of ACF's Anticipated Substantial Involvement Under the Cooperative Agreement

A cooperative agreement is a specific method of awarding Federal assistance in which substantial Federal involvement is anticipated. A cooperative agreement clearly defines the respective responsibilities of CB and the awardee prior to the award. CB anticipates that agency involvement will produce programmatic benefits to the recipient otherwise unavailable to them for carrying out the project. The involvement and collaboration includes:

- CB review and approval of planning stages of the activities before implementation phases may begin;
- CB and recipient joint collaboration in the performance of key programmatic activities (i.e., strategic planning, implementation, information technology enhancements, T/TA, publications or products, and evaluation);
- Close monitoring by CB of the requirements stated in this announcement that limit the awardee's discretion with respect to scope of services offered, organizational structure, and management processes; and
- Close monitoring by CB during performance which may, in order to ensure compliance with the intent of this funding, exceed those Federal stewardship responsibilities customary for grant activities.

Please see *Section IV.5 Funding Restrictions* for limitations on the use of grant funds awarded under this announcement.

### III. Eligibility Information

#### III.1. Eligible Applicants

Section 427(a) of the Social Security Act identifies eligible applicants as "State, local, or tribal child welfare agencies, and private nonprofit organizations that have experience in working with foster children or children in kinship care arrangements." If the applicant is a private organization, documentation of support from the relevant local or State Child Welfare agency and a description of how the organization plans to coordinate its services and activities with those offered by the relevant local or State Child Welfare agency are required.

Individuals, foreign entities, and sole proprietorship organizations are not eligible to compete for, or receive, awards under this announcement. See *Section III.3. Other*.

Faith-based and community organizations that meet eligibility requirements are eligible to receive awards under this funding opportunity announcement.

See "Legal Status of Applicant Entity" in *Section IV.2* for documentation required to support eligibility.

#### III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement: Yes

Grantees are required to meet a non-Federal share of the project cost, in accordance with **Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Pub.L. 110-351)**; **Social Security Act section 427(d) & (e); 42 U.S.C. § 627(d) & (e)**

Grantees must provide at least 25 percent of the total approved cost of the project for the first two years of the project period, and 50 percent of the total approved cost of the project in the third year of the project period. The total approved cost of the project is the sum of the ACF (Federal) share and the non-Federal share. For example, in the first year of the project period, in order to meet the match requirements, a project requesting \$550,000.00 in ACF (Federal) funds must provide a non-Federal share of the approved total project cost of at least \$183,333.00, which is 25 percent of total approved project cost of \$733,333.00.

The non-Federal share may be met by cash or in-kind contributions, although applicants are encouraged to meet their match requirements through cash contributions. No more than 50 percent of the non-Federal share may be in-kind. Grantees will be held accountable for commitments of non-Federal resources even if they exceed the amount of the required match. Failure to provide the required amount will result in the disallowance of Federal funds. A lack of supporting documentation at the time of application submission will not exclude the application from competitive review.

Cost-sharing will not be used as a preference and/or evaluation criterion in the review of applications.

Under this FOA, applicants are required to fully identify and document in the grant application the specific costs or contributions proposed to meet a matching or cost sharing requirement, the source of the funding or contribution, and how the valuation was determined.

Grant recipients will be required to meet the matching requirement on an annual basis. In keeping with good business practices, while not required, a recipient should provide required matching in proportion to its expenditure of the Federal share of the total project costs.

If an applicant proposes cost sharing at a level in excess of a cost sharing requirement, and this proposed cost sharing is accepted as part of the approved budget and project, it becomes an award requirement enforceable through the Notice of Award (NOA). Therefore the excess is included in the amount of the total approved budget, and the percentage for the non-federal share in block 17a of the NOA will adjust accordingly.

Matching requirements (including in-kind contributions) of less than \$200,000 (up to \$199,999) are waived under grants made to the governments of American Samoa, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (other than those consolidated under other provisions of 48 U.S.C. 1469) pursuant to 48 U.S.C. 1469a(d). This waiver applies whether the matching required under the grant equals or exceeds \$200,000.

### **III.3. Other**

#### **DUNS Number (Universal Identifier) and Central Contractor Registration (CCR) Requirements**

##### **DUNS Number Requirement**

Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number is the nine-digit, or thirteen-digit (DUNS + 4), number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities.

All applicants and subrecipients must have a DUNS number at the time of application in order to be considered for a grant or cooperative agreement. A DUNS number is required whether an applicant is submitting a paper application or using the Government-wide electronic portal, [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). A DUNS number is required for every application for a new award or renewal/continuation of an award, including applications or plans under formula, entitlement, and block grant programs. A DUNS number may be acquired at no cost online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. To acquire a DUNS number by phone, contact the D&B Government Customer Response Center:



U.S. and U.S Virgin Islands: 1-866-705-5711  
Alaska and Puerto Rico: 1-800-234-3867 (Select Option 2, then Option 1)  
Monday - Friday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., CST

The process to request a D-U-N-S Number by telephone will take between 5 and 10 minutes.

### **Central Contractor Registration (CCR) Requirement**

Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is the Federal registrant database and repository into which an entity must provide information required for the conduct of business as a recipient. CCR, managed by the General Services Administration, collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of agency financial assistance missions.

Effective October 1, 2011, HHS required all entities that plan to apply for, and ultimately receive, Federal grant funds from any HHS Agency, or receive subawards directly from recipients of those grant funds to:

- Be registered in the CCR prior to submitting an application or plan;
- Maintain an active CCR registration with current information at all times during which it has an active award or an application or plan under consideration by an OPDIV; and
- Provide its DUNS number in each application or plan it submits to the OPDIV.

ACF is prohibited from making an award until an applicant has complied with these requirements. At the time an award is ready to be made, if the intended recipient has not complied with these requirements, ACF:

- May determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive an award; and
- May use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Additionally, all first-tier subaward recipients (i.e., direct subrecipient) must have a DUNS number at the time the subaward is made

CCR registration may be made online at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov) or by phone at 1-866-606-8220. CCR registration must be updated annually. CCR registration must be active and maintained with current information at all times during which an organization has an active award or an application under consideration.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to register at the CCR well in advance of the application due date.

### **APPLICATION DISQUALIFICATION FACTORS**

Applications from individuals, foreign entities, or sole proprietorship organizations will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

#### **Award Ceiling Disqualification**

Applications that request an award amount exceeding the *Award Ceiling* per budget period, or per project period, as stated in *Section II. Award Information*, will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. This disqualification applies only to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the first 12-month budget period for projects with multiple budget periods. If the project and budget period are the same, the disqualification applies to the *Award Ceiling* listed for the project period.

#### **Application Submission Disqualifications**

**Beginning January 1, 2012, ACF requires electronic submission of applications at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).** Applicants that do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to the Internet may contact ACF for an exemption that will allow these applicants to submit an application in paper format. Information on requesting an exemption from electronic application submission is found in *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options*.

**The deadline for electronic application submission is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times. Electronic applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) after 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, as indicated by a dated and time-stamped email from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.** That is, applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), on or after 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

**Please Note:** Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time, which fail the Grants.gov validation check, will not be received at ACF. These applications will not be acknowledged. Applications that fail the Grants.gov validation check are not transmitted to ACF though they may have been submitted on time.

Each time an application is submitted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the application will receive a new date and time-stamp email. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps that result in a validated application, which are transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

**The deadline for receipt of paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date listed in the Overview and in Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times. Paper applications received after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.**

**Paper applications received from applicants that have not requested an exemption from required electronic submission will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement. See "Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission" in Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission.**

Applications that are disqualified under any of these circumstances will receive written notification by letter or by email.

Read and observe the formatting instructions for application submissions in *Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission*.

## **Section IV. Application and Submission Information**

### **IV.1. Address to Request Application Package**

CB Operations Center, c/o Lux Consulting Group  
8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

**Electronic Application Submission:**

The electronic application submission package is available at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

**Applications in Paper Format:**

For applicants that have received an exemption to submit applications in paper format, Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at the ACF Funding Opportunities Forms webpage at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants\\_resources.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html). See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* if applicants do not have an Internet connection or sufficient computing capacity to upload large documents (files) to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

**Standard Forms that are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 U.S.C. § 794d):**

Available at the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](http://www.Grants.gov) website and at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_forms](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms).

**Federal Relay Service:**

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY - Text Telephone or ASCII - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

**Section IV.2. Content and Form of Application Submission****FORMATTING ACF APPLICATIONS****For All ACF Applications:****Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR)**

The individual(s), named by the applicant/recipient organization, who is authorized to act for the applicant/recipient and to assume the obligations imposed by the Federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to grant applications or awards.

Each applicant must designate an Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR). An AOR is named by the applicant, and is authorized to act for the applicant, to assume the obligations imposed by the Federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to the grant application or awards.

AOR Authorization is part of the registration process at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) where the AOR will create a short profile and obtain a username and password from the Grants.gov Credential Provider. AORs will only be authorized for the DUNS number registered in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR).

**Point of Contact**

In addition to the AOR, a point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR. The point of contact must be available to answer any questions pertaining to the application.

**Application Checklist**

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

**Follow the instructions provided in the formatting section to ensure that your application can be printed efficiently and consistently for the competitive review.**

**Observe page limitations.**

All applicants must follow the instructions provided in this section. Be sure to print all attachments (components) on paper and count the number of pages before submission. Keep the printed copy as a hard copy of your application for your files.

**Application Package Components**

Applications must be divided into the sections listed in the table. (The order in which components are submitted electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) or included in a paper application may not be the same as listed in the table.) Page limitations apply to the Project Description document and the Appendices and the following:

- The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.
- The Budget Justification should be no more than 10 single-spaced pages and will not count against page limitations.

Application Package Components	Page Limitations
Required Standard Forms (SFs) and/or OMB-approved Forms	No page limitations.
Required Certifications and Assurances	No page limitations.
Project Summary/Abstract	Limited to one single-spaced page.
Project Description	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.
Budget Justification	No more than 10 single-spaced pages and will not count against page limitations.
Proof of Legal Status/Proof of Non-Profit Status	No page limitations.
Appendices	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.

**ELECTRONIC APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED VIA [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov):**

**Notice: The Administration for Children and Families has implemented required electronic application submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). Applicants are now required to submit their applications electronically unless they have requested and received an exemption that will allow submission in paper format. See Section IV.2. Application Submission Options.**

Electronic applications will only be accepted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). ACF will not accept applications submitted via email or via facsimile. Only applications, which pass the Grants.gov validation check, will be acknowledged.

**Please read this section carefully before beginning application submission.** It is mandatory to follow the instructions provided in this section to ensure that your application can be printed efficiently and consistently for review.

**Copies Required**

Applicants must submit one complete copy of the application package electronically. Applicants submitting electronic applications need not provide additional copies of their application package.

**NOTE:** Applications submitted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) will undergo a validation check. See *Section IV.2. Application Submission Options* and *Section IV.3. Submission Due Dates and Times, Explanation of Due Dates*. The validation check can affect whether the application is accepted for review. Applications that fail the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) validation check will not be transmitted to ACF. If the application fails the validation check and is not resubmitted by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date, it will be disqualified.

### Signatures

Follow the AOR Authorization and E-Biz POC instructions provided at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

### Required OMB-Approved and Standard Forms (SFs)

[www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) provides its own protocols for the submission of OMB-approved and Standard Forms (SFs) such as the SF-424 application and budget forms and the SF-P/PSL, Project/Performance Site Location form. See *Section IV.2. Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications* for required OMB-approved Standard Forms and required assurances and certifications.

### Application Package Components

Applications must be divided into the sections listed in the table. **It is important that each component is submitted in a separate electronic file.** Page limitations apply to the Project Description document and the Appendices and the following:

- The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page.
- The Budget Justification should be no more than 10 single-spaced pages.

Application Package Components	Page Limitations
Required Standard Forms (SFs) and/or OMB-approved Forms	No page limitations.
Required Certifications and Assurances	No page limitations.
Project Summary/Abstract	Limited to one single-spaced page.
Project Description	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.
Budget Justification	No more than 10 single-spaced pages and will not count against page limitations.
Proof of Legal Status/Proof of Non-Profit Status	No page limitations.
Appendices	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.

The required content of the Project Description and any Appendices, and their page limits, are listed later in this section.

With the exception of the required Standard Forms (SFs), all application materials must be formatted so that they will print out onto 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. **All pages of the application component, i.e., Project Description, Budget Justification, Appendices, must be sequentially numbered.** Applicants should print all attachments on paper and count the number of pages before submitting the application. Applicants should keep a hard copy of the submitted application package for their files. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable.

All elements of the application submission, with the exception of the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, the Budget Justification, required Assurances and Certifications, and proof of legal status/non-profit status, must be in double-spaced format in 12-point font. The Project Summary/Abstract is required to be one single-spaced page in 12-point font. The Budget Justification may be single-spaced page in 12-point font and should be no more than 10 pages. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable.

**Applicants must follow the instructions provided in this section:**

**Carefully observe the file naming conventions required by [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).**

Limit file names to 50 characters and do not use special characters (example: &,-,\*,%,/,#) including periods (.), blank spaces, and accent marks, within application form fields, and file attachment names. An underscore ( ) may be used to separate a file name.

**Use only file formats supported by ACF.**

It is critical that applicants only submit application components using the supported file formats listed here. Documents in file formats that are not supported by ACF will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

**ACF supports the following file formats:**

- Adobe PDF – Portable Document Format (.pdf)
- Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx)
- Microsoft Excel (.xls or .xlsx)
- Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt)
- Corel WordPerfect (.wpd)
- Image Formats (.JPG, .GIF, .TIFF, or .BMP only)

**Do not encrypt or password protect the electronic application files!**

If ACF cannot access submitted electronic files because they have been encrypted or are password protected, the affected file will be removed from the application and will not be used in the competitive review. This may make the application incomplete and ACF will not make any awards based on an incomplete application.

**PAPER APPLICATION SUBMISSIONS:**

**The following requirements are only applicable to applications submitted in paper format.**

**Applicants must receive an exemption from ACF in order to submit an application in paper format.**

See *Section IV.2.Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission* later in this section under *Application Submission Options*.

Application Package Components	Page Limitations
Required Standard Forms (SFs) and/or OMB-approved Forms	No page limitations.
Required Certifications and Assurances	No page limitations.
Project Summary/Abstract	Limited to one single-spaced page.
Project Description	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.

Budget Justification	No more than 10 single-spaced pages and will not count against page limitations.
Proof of Legal Status/Proof of Non-Profit Status	No page limitations.
Appendices	Page Limitations and included items are listed later in this section.

### **Copies Required**

Applicants must provide one original and two copies of all application materials when submitting an application in paper format.

### **Signatures**

An original signature of the AOR is required only on the original copy of paper application submissions. A point of contact on matters involving the application must also be identified on the SF-424 at item 8f. The point of contact, known as the Project Director or Principal Investigator, should not be identical to the person identified as the AOR.

### **Format Requirements for Paper Applications**

Applicants must follow the instructions provided in this section.

All application materials must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" white paper with 1-inch margins. **All pages of the paper application submission must be sequentially numbered.** Application materials must be printed on one side only of each page so that they may be easily reproduced. If two-sided pages are submitted, only the "front" page will be used.

All elements of the application submission, with the exception of the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, the Budget Justification, required Assurances and Certifications, and proof of legal status/non-profit status, must be in double-spaced format in 12-point font. The Project Summary/Abstract is required to be one single-spaced page in 12-point font. The Budget Justification may be single-spaced, in 12-point font, and should be no more than 10 pages. The font size on any scanned documents must be large enough so that it is readable.

All copies of a mailed or hand-delivered paper application must be submitted in a single package. A separate package must be submitted for application under a single funding opportunity. The package must be clearly labeled for the specific funding opportunity it is addressing.

Because each application will be duplicated, do not use or include separate covers, binders, clips, tabs, plastic inserts, maps, brochures, or any other items that cannot be processed easily on a photocopy machine with an automatic feed. Do not bind, clip, staple, or fasten in any way separate subsections of the application, including supporting documentation. Use a clip (not a staple) to securely bind the application together. Applicants are advised that the copies of the application submitted, not the original, will be reproduced by the Federal government for review. Application materials must be one-sided for duplication purposes.

Instructions on the order of assembly for paper application submissions are available under this formatting section.

### **Addresses for Submission of Paper Applications**

See *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements* for addresses for paper application submissions.



## **Page Limitations for Paper Format Application Submissions**

Page limitations do not include OMB-approved Standard Forms (SFs), the one-page Project Summary/Abstract, proof of legal status/non-profit status, required Assurances and Certifications, and the Budget Justification, which should be no more than 10 single-spaced pages.

If an application exceeds the cited page limitation for double-spaced pages in the Project Description or the double-spaced page limitation cited for the Appendices, the extra pages will be removed and will not be reviewed. In addition, if an application narrative is single-spaced and/or one-and-a-half spaced (in whole or in part) the total number of these lines will be doubled. This adjustment may result in an increased total number of pages, which will be removed so that the application conforms to the cited double-spaced page limitation.

The Project Summary/Abstract is limited to one single-spaced page with 12-point font. Any pages over the one-page limit will be removed.

## **Page Limitations and Content of The Project Description and Appendices for All Application Formats:**

### ***Additional Instructions for Electronic and Paper Applications Under this FOA***

***Organizing the Application.*** Applicants must follow the general instructions above in the section labeled Application Package Components. In addition, applicants must adhere to the following instructions for organizing the Project Description and Appendices sections of the Application Package under this FOA. Note that the page limit for the Budget Justification section is expanded under this FOA.

***Organizing the Project Description and Appendices.*** Applicants must address each of the application requirements included in Section IV.2. Applicants must organize their Project Description and Appendices in the following sequence:

*The **Project Description** must include the following items in this order:*

1. Table of Contents
2. Objectives and Need for Assistance
3. Approach
4. Evaluation
5. Organizational Capacity

*The **Appendices** must include the following items in this order:*

1. Logic Model
2. Third-Party Agreements
3. Staff and Position Data
4. Resumes
5. Organizational Charts
6. Indirect Cost Rate Letter (if applicable)

***Page limits.*** The Project Description and Appendices combined are limited to a total of 100 pages. Under this FOA, the Budget Justification may be expanded to 20 pages.

***Formatting.*** Charts, budget tables, Third-Party Agreements, staff and position data, supplemental letters, and documents, applicants must be in 10-point font or larger and may be single spaced.

## Required Forms, Assurances, and Certifications

Applicants seeking grant or cooperative agreement awards under this announcement must submit the listed Standard Forms (SFs), assurances, and certifications with the application. All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available at [ACF Funding Opportunities Forms](#) or at the [Grants.gov Forms Repository](#) unless specified otherwise.

Forms / Assurances / Certifications	Submission Requirement	Notes / Description
<b>SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance and SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)</b>	Submission is required for all applicants by the application due date.	Required for all applications.
<b>SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs and SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs</b>	Submission is required for all applicants when applying for a non-construction project. Standard Forms must be used. Forms must be submitted by the application due date.	Required for all applications when applying for a non-construction project. By signing and submitting the SF-424B, applicants are making the appropriate certification of their compliance with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination.
<b>Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants</b>	<b>Submission is voluntary.</b> Submission may be made with the application by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> . Or, it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Non-profit private organizations (not including private universities) are encouraged to submit the survey with their applications. Submission of the survey is voluntary. Applicants applying electronically may submit the survey along with the application as part of an appendix or as a separate document. Hard copy submissions should include the survey in a separate envelope.
<b>SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</b>	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due prior at the time of application. It may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the applicant shall complete and submit the

		SF-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions. Applicants must furnish an executed copy of the Certification Regarding Lobbying prior to award.
<b>Certification Regarding Lobbying</b>	Submission required of all applicants with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.	Submission of this Certification is required for all applications.

*The applicant's signature on the application constitutes its assurance that it will comply with the following requirements:*

- *Have the project fully functioning within 90 days following the notification of the award;*
- *Participate in the Family Connection cross-site evaluation and technical assistance contract that relates to this FOA;*
- *Submit all performance indicator data, program, evaluation, and financial reports in a timely manner (see Section VI.3 Reporting), in the recommended formats (to be provided). CB prefers and will accept the interim and final reports and attachments on disk or electronically using a standard word processing program; however, projects are required to provide the original and two copies of performance progress and final reports;*
- *Submit an original and two copies of the final program/evaluation report and any program products to CB within 90 days of project end date;*
- *Acknowledge that CB reserves the right to secure and distribute grantee products and materials, including copies of journal articles written by grantees about their grant projects;*
- *Archive data from the program evaluation with the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect within 90 days of the termination of Federal funding for the project. The applicant's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and research participants must be made aware that the data from the project will be archived and made available to other researchers after personal identifiers have been removed. Archiving will involve providing individual respondent data in electronic form and the accompanying documentation, including the codebook, the final report, and copies of the research instruments, as appropriate. A manual describing the guidelines of the Archive, *Depositing Data with the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect: A Handbook for Investigators*, is available from the Archive directly at the Family Life Development Center, MVR Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853 (phone: (607) 255-7799); from the Archive web site at: <http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu> or from the Child Welfare Information Gateway web site at: <http://childwelfare.gov>.*
- *Include the following notice with all grantee materials, products, publications, news releases, etc.:*

*Funded through the Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau, Grant # \_\_\_\_\_. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the funders, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This information is in the public domain. Readers are encouraged to copy and share it, but please credit \_\_\_\_\_.*

## **Non-Federal Reviewers**

Since ACF will be using non-Federal reviewers in the review process, applicants have the option of omitting from the application copies (not the original) specific salary rates or amounts for individuals specified in the application budget as well as Social Security Numbers, if otherwise required for individuals. The copies may include summary salary information. If applicants are submitting their application electronically, ACF will omit the same specific salary rate information from copies made for use during the review and selection process.

## **The Project Description**

### **The Project Description Overview**

The project description provides the majority of information by which an application is evaluated and ranked in competition with other applications for available assistance. The project description should be concise and complete. It should address the activity for which Federal funds are being requested. Supporting documents should be included where they can present information clearly and succinctly. In preparing the project description, information that is responsive to each of the requested evaluation criteria must be provided. Awarding offices use this and other information in making their funding recommendations. It is important, therefore, that this information be included in the application in a manner that is clear and complete.

### **General Expectations and Instructions**

ACF is particularly interested in specific project descriptions that focus on outcomes and convey strategies for achieving intended performance. Project descriptions are evaluated on the basis of substance and measurable outcomes, not length. Extensive exhibits are not required. Cross-referencing should be used rather than repetition. Supporting information concerning activities that will not be directly funded by the grant or information that does not directly pertain to an integral part of the grant-funded activity should be placed in an appendix.

### **General Instructions for Preparing a Full Project Description**

#### **Introduction**

Applicants that are required to submit a full project description shall prepare the project description statement in accordance with the following instructions while being aware of the specified evaluation criteria. The topics listed in this section provide a broad overview of what the project description should include while the Criteria in *Section V.1.* identify the measures that will be used to evaluate applications.

#### **Table of Contents**

List the contents of the application including corresponding page numbers.

#### **Project Summary/Abstract**

Provide a summary of the application's project description. The summary must be clear, accurate, concise, and without reference to other parts of the application. The abstract must include a brief description of the proposed grant project including the needs to be addressed, the proposed services, and the population group(s) to be served.

Please place the following at the top of the abstract:

- Project Title
- Applicant Name
- Address
- Contact Phone Numbers (Voice, Fax)

- E-Mail Address
- Web Site Address, if applicable

The project abstract must be single-spaced and limited to one page in length.

### **Objectives And Need For Assistance**

Clearly identify the physical, economic, social, financial, institutional, and/or other problem(s) requiring a solution. The need for assistance, including the nature and scope of the problem, must be demonstrated, and the principal and subordinate objectives of the project must be clearly and concisely stated. Supporting documentation, such as letters of support and testimonials from concerned interests other than the applicant, may be included. Any relevant data based on planning studies or needs assessments should be included or referred to in the endnotes/footnotes. Incorporate demographic data and participant/beneficiary information, as needed. In developing the project description, the applicant may volunteer or be requested to provide information on the total range of projects currently being conducted and supported (or to be initiated), some of which may be outside the scope of the funding opportunity announcement.

### **Outcomes Expected**

Identify the outcomes to be derived from the project.

#### **NOTE:**

*By successfully implementing their proposed projects, grantees under this FOA will demonstrate the impact of KN services on the capacity of parents and families to provide for children's needs. The project evaluation must be designed to determine to what degree protective factors were strengthened and indicators related to permanency and child/family well-being improved as a result of an increase in the use of targeted services and supports through participation in the CW/TANF collaborative KN program.*

*Applicants must propose and justify a feasible plan to produce, evaluate and disseminate information on each of the child and family-level outcomes listed below.*

- **Permanency Outcomes** which show the degree that children have permanency and stability in their living situations after receiving KN services, including placement outcomes for children, i.e. reunification, remaining in kinship care, and placement in foster care;
- **Well-being Outcomes** in the following areas that indicate improvement after participation in the KN program:
  - Domains of child well-being, including cognitive functioning, behavioral/emotional functioning, physical health and development, social functioning and mental health;
  - Indicators of caregiver well-being, including concrete family needs, social support, parental stress, and physical and mental health.

*In addition, applicants must address **organizational-level outcomes** to show what degree the collaborative CW/TANF approach to KN services improved outcomes for children and families.*

### **Approach**

Outline a plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished. Account for all functions or activities identified in the application. Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state your reason for taking the proposed approach rather than other approaches. Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement.

Provide quantitative monthly or quarterly projections of the outcomes to be achieved for each function or activity in such terms as the number of people to be served and the number of activities accomplished.

Data may be organized and presented as project tasks and subtasks with their corresponding timelines during the project period. For example, each project task could be assigned to a row in the first column of a grid. Then, a unit of time could be assigned to each subsequent column, beginning with the first unit (i.e., week, month, quarter) of the project and ending with the last. Shading, arrows, or other markings could be used across the applicable grid boxes or cells, representing units of time, to indicate the approximate duration and/or frequency of each task and its start and end dates within the project period.

When accomplishments cannot be quantified by activity or function, list them in chronological order to show the schedule of accomplishments and their target dates.

Provide a list of organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution.

**NOTE:**

*The applicant must present a rationale for the proposed project which is based on a review of the relevant literature that reflects a clear understanding of the research on best practices and promising approaches in working with kinship caregivers and the target population, including those related to protective factors and well-being outcomes for children and families.*

*The applicant's plan must be based on a clear understanding of the requirements of the Fostering Connections legislation, and the proposed project must be designed to contribute to meeting those requirements. The applicant must demonstrate how the proposed project:*

- *Is innovative, and involves strategies that build on, or are an alternative to, existing strategies; and*
- *Is likely to contribute to the knowledge base around collaborative KN programs, if successfully implemented and evaluated.*

*Applicants must present a project plan based on a delineated theory of change, which describes why particular intervention methods were selected and provides a justification for proposed program activities (Fraser, Richman, Galinsky & Day 2009). It must summarize the target population(s), the project initiatives and associated interventions, the expected short-term and long-term outcomes of the initiative and interventions, and explain how and why they are expected to address the identified needs of the target population(s).*

- *Applicants are required to include documentation and discussion of a current assessment of the needs of the target population of kinship caregiver families in the geographic area to be served by the proposed KN project;*
- *Applicants must provide data from their CW and TANF agencies and other sources, as appropriate, to identify the size, characteristics, and needs of their target population(s), and to show how those have informed the development of the proposed KN project;*
- *Applicants must clearly identify specific target population(s) to be addressed, and delineate distinct strategies and considerations, including anticipated challenges, which reflect the characteristics and demographics of these, in order to identify, engage and serve them effectively in the proposed KN project; and*
- *Applicants must describe how services provided to the target population will be culturally*

*competent.*

*The proposed plan must include the rationale for selecting proposed functions and activities; descriptions of any unusual features of the project, such as design or technological innovations; and the details of how these will be accomplished. The applicant must identify reasonable timeframes for implementation and provide a detailed timeline chart and narrative, including major milestones, target dates, and a description of factors that could speed or hinder the implementation and how these would be managed. The plan must specify how the proposed KN project will do the following:*

- *Provide for coordination and referrals from the CW agency, the TANF agency, other State or local agencies, and grant-funded programs that promote service coordination or provide information and referral services, in order to avoid duplication or fragmentation of services to kinship care families;*
- *Convene and consult with the CW agency, the TANF agency, other relevant government agencies, i.e., aging, mental health, mental retardation and developmental disabilities, substance abuse treatment, health, youth services, human services, education, child support enforcement; and non-profit, and faith-based partners, to assist in the development or expansion and the operation of the KN program;*
- *Collaborate with public and private agencies, including schools, community based or faith-based organizations, and relevant government agencies, to increase their knowledge of the needs of kinship care families in order to promote more targeted services, including those addressing the well-being of those families;*
- *Ensure that the programs are being planned and operated in consultation with kinship caregivers and organizations representing them, youth raised by kinship caregivers, relevant government agencies, and relevant community-based or faith-based organizations. When possible, projects will have caregiver representation and input on the program's advisory board or project staff;*
- *Maintain the active involvement of collaborating entities on an ongoing basis in order to identify and address challenges in the planning and operation of the KN program, and to participate in sustainability planning for the purpose of continuing the proposed program and supporting improved KN practices at the conclusion of Federal funding;*
- *Establish information and referral systems, including 2-1-1 or 3-1-1 information systems where available, that link (via toll-free access or online) kinship caregivers, kinship support group facilitators, and kinship service providers with:*
  - *Each other;*
  - *Eligibility and enrollment information for Federal, State, and local benefits;*
  - *Relevant training to assist kinship caregivers in caregiving and in obtaining benefits and services;*
  - *Relevant legal assistance and help in obtaining legal services;*
  - *Relevant health assistance and help in obtaining advocacy and referrals to medical, dental and mental health services;*

*Note: KN programs under this FOA shall link to, but not directly provide, needed services for kinship caregivers, including legal or health assistance. Applicants may propose auxiliary services, such as transportation, to facilitate access to needed services, and forums and support groups for caregivers, for the purpose of exchange of information about these services and to provide mutual support in accessing them.*

- *Use a range of methods for outreach to kinship caregivers and coordination of services. Key outreach activities may include:*
  - *Establishing, and updating a kinship care web site;*
  - *Distributing program materials (e.g., flyers, information packets, resource directories, newsletters, etc.) or other relevant guides or outreach materials at open houses, community*



- fairs or similar activities for kinship caregivers;*
- *Attending community events including contacting churches and other faith-based organizations and social service agencies, e.g., health clinics, senior centers, YMCA, etc.;*
- *Promoting the program through the use of kinship caregivers as ambassadors to network with other social service agencies; and*
- *Disseminating program information through press releases, newsletters, radio interviews, newspaper announcements, and speaking engagements;*
- *Establish a screening assessment process to determine caregivers' eligibility and gather data on the needs of kinship caregivers and their families. This screening assessment process must address the child well-being domains of behavioral and emotional functioning, social functioning, cognitive and academic functioning, and physical health and development. Domains of well-being for caregivers must also be included. In addition to aspects of caregiving, caregiver well-being in the areas of health and mental health must be addressed. The assessment must determine which kinship caregivers need more intensive services; and*
- *Identify and address challenges for kinship caregiver families in identifying and accessing needed services in the targeted service area, and specify approaches to address these effectively, including:*
  - *The needs of kinship caregivers who do not speak English, speak English as a second language, have low levels of literacy or poor access to technology and low computer literacy skills; and*
  - *Specific needs pertinent to the locale, such geographic limitations, transportation issues especially in rural areas; and child care needs.*

*The applicant must design the proposed project to demonstrate the effectiveness of a collaborative CW/TANF approach in achieving improved outcomes for the target populations through the provision of KN services.*

- *Applicants are required to provide documentation of a meaningful collaboration and partnership between the CW and TANF agencies. A Third-Party Agreement must be submitted to substantiate this collaboration, detailing the roles and responsibilities of each partner to meet the project's goals, and commitment from each partner to undertake and be fully engaged in KN activities, including accessing State administrative data for evaluation for full project period, regardless of changes in administration, economic status, or other foreseeable factors. In addition, the applicant must document, via Third-Party Agreement(s), the commitment from all other public/private agencies involved in the proposed KN work. Further, the applicant's organizational management plan must identify the roles, responsibilities, and time commitments of partners, subcontractors, staff, and kinship caregivers to fulfill their assigned roles and functions effectively for each proposed project component;*
- *Applicants must document their ability to use an existing data sharing agreement or Third-Party Agreement between the CW and TANF agencies and other project partners that allows information on services and case level data to be shared among the agencies. Through this agreement, CW and TANF agencies at the State or local level can ensure that there is no duplication of services and Kinship Navigators are fully accessing the CW and TANF support services to address the kinship caregivers' needs. Access to this data will allow for a refined identification and ongoing assessment of the needs of the target population, and for evaluation analysis of outcomes of caregiver families served by the KN programs; and*
- *Applicants must propose an approach to the proposed project which identifies and addresses relevant systemic and service issues related to the CW and TANF systems, including policies and family-centered practices towards kinship caregivers' eligibility, and availability of services in the targeted geographic location.*

*The applicant must present plans for the proposed project to develop into a model site for other*

*jurisdictions to look to in developing the ability to implement similar programs. The applicant must identify ways to disseminate project information and resources strategically and effectively, so the knowledge developed about effective, collaborative KN services for the target population is received by key target audiences and used as intended to achieve identified dissemination objectives, including support of sustainability goals.*

### ***Use of Funds***

*Applicants must present documentation of fiscal control and accounting procedures to ensure proper disbursement and accounting of Federal funds. Applicants must describe their commitment to use grant funds for allowable activities only, documenting that funds will only be used for the activities and purposes identified in the FOA. Refer to Section IV.5., Funding Restrictions for further information.*

### ***Non-Supplanting and Augmentation***

*Applicants that are current recipients of Federal financial assistance must demonstrate the extent to which their proposal meets the unique goals and objectives of this FOA. Applicants may not submit application plans to augment their current federally funded programs. When Congress makes an appropriation, it establishes an authorized funding level for that program. To permit an agency to operate beyond this level, with funds derived from some other source without specific congressional sanction, would amount to a usurpation of the congressional prerogative. For example, a grantee that is funded under one appropriation may not simply modify their current Federal project or propose to increase their number of participants under a different appropriation. Applicants need to provide sufficient information as to how program activities are not augmenting existing services*

### ***Evaluation***

Provide a narrative addressing how the conduct of the project and its results will be evaluated. In addressing the evaluation of results, state what measures will be used to determine the extent to which the project has achieved its stated objectives and the extent to which the accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project. Discuss the criteria to be used to evaluate results, and explain the methodology that will be used to determine if the needs identified and discussed are being met and if the project results and benefits are being achieved. With respect to the conduct of the project, define the procedures to be employed to determine whether the project is being conducted in a manner consistent with the work plan presented and discuss the impact of the project's various activities that address the project's effectiveness.

#### ***NOTE:***

*The applicant must propose a rigorous evaluation design, which is appropriate to the population, proposed intervention, and potential comparison groups, and is realistic and feasible within the 36-month project period. The design must include:*

- Identification of protective factors and well-being outcomes for children and families, and explanation of how these will be examined; and*
- Identification of systemic level changes of the CW/TANF systems related to collaborative KN programs, and explanation of how these will be examined.*

*The design must include both process and outcomes evaluation components:*

- The process evaluation must assess the implementation of the project, as well as the linkages between the collaborative partners that will help ensure that identified needs of children, youth and families are met; and*
- The outcomes component must use a sufficiently rigorous approach to examine how the approaches used in this demonstration project affect key outcomes of interest, including permanency indicators and child and family well-being indicators. If not utilizing a randomized control approach, the applicant must provide an adequate description and justification that the proposed evaluation*

*design is the most rigorous design possible for addressing the questions of interest, and evidence of the equivalence to the intervention group of any comparison groups that will be employed. The preliminary outcome evaluation design must be sufficiently rigorous to provide credible evidence that the effects on key outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being, including relevant child well-being outcomes, can be attributed to the CW/TANF collaborative KN program.*

*Applicants must identify and justify:*

- *Inclusion of appropriate evaluation measures;*
- *The screening protocol, selected by the grantee, for kinship caregivers for referral for more intensive services within the KN program;*
- *The process by which, after caregivers are referred to more intensive services, the grantee will conduct assessments of the child and family in order to target services needed to support the permanency and well-being of the child; and*
- *A sound outreach plan to contact and locate kinship caregivers, at six and 12 months, providing incentives if necessary, for caregivers to provide necessary follow up data to determine how well appropriate services were accessed and desired outcomes were achieved. Projects are required to include this service utilization data within their evaluation.*

*For the purpose of informing the local evaluation, applicants must propose plans to capture data related to:*

- *Demographic and characteristic information on caregiver families;*
- *Numbers and types of assessments of the child/youth and family that address service needs to support the safety, permanency and well-being of the child/youth;*
- *Relevant domains of child well-being, including behavioral and emotional functioning, social functioning, cognitive and academic functioning, and physical health and development; and caregiver attributes, behaviors and health/mental health status. (A solid conceptualization of how applicants intend to measure child and caregiver well-being, as well as changes in relevant protective factors associated with the well-being domains, is essential.);*
- *Service utilization, for example the types of legal, health and financial referrals and services that the family received by accessing KN services; including whether informal and formal kinship families received assistance, referrals and/or services from the TANF agency and the CW agency; including client data and number of referrals; and*
- *Numbers and types of organizational activities to support collaboration on KN services for the target population, such as active participation by partners in planning, implementation and evaluation activities, co-location of services, joint training, and shared communication/dissemination mechanisms.*

*Applicants must identify how the evaluation will capture the following data related to child outcomes:*

- *For informal kinship families, whether the family experienced an allegation or substantiation of child abuse or neglect that would lead to the child entering the placement and care responsibility of the CW agency; and*
- *For formal kinship families, whether the child reentered the placement and care responsibility of the CW agency.*

*In addition, the evaluation will address organizational aspects of collaboration, and the impact of organizational policies and procedures, such as those that facilitate data sharing, which support collaborative KN activities. The evaluation design will identify linkages between collaborative CW/TANF activities and effective KN services for the target population.*

*Applicants must document the agency's ability to access data from the CW and TANF agencies and other project partners to allow information on services and case level data to be gathered into an external database management system for purposes of the evaluation.*

- *Applicants must provide documentation of this access, e.g., data sharing agreement/Third-Party Agreement between the CW and TANF agencies that addresses the intended use of data, data confidentiality, documentation, and financial costs;*
- *Applicants must provide a strong plan to access data through this data sharing agreement to allow for a refined identification and ongoing assessment of the needs of the target population, to ensure that there is not a duplication of services provided to caregivers, and for evaluation analysis of outcomes of caregiver families served by the KN programs; and*
- *The plan will include a detailed explanation of ways in which the CW and TANF agencies will facilitate creation of a culture within the agencies to support the evaluation by ensuring that staff members participate actively and with fidelity in data collection and data entry necessary for the evaluation.*

*Applicants must document the staff qualifications and organizational capacity of the local evaluator(s) to implement a rigorous evaluation of a project of this type within the project period, and demonstrate the necessary independence from the project to assure objectivity, including documentation of experience and expertise related to the following:*

- *Understanding of the State and/or local level CW, TANF, and partner agencies that will be working together to support implementation of the grant project. Local evaluators must demonstrate experience conducting systems-level research and an understanding of how to measure systems change;*
- *Experience conducting research on program fidelity and implementation and child and family outcomes. Local evaluators will collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative information about the KN program (for example, the screening and assessment process of the needs of kinship caregivers, and the quality of service delivery), child outcomes (for example, child emotional and physical well-being as reported by parents or measured directly), and family outcomes (for example, indicators of child maltreatment, and parent social and emotional well-being);*
- *Experience collecting and analyzing data. Local evaluators will collect and analyze program data from the CW and TANF agencies. Local evaluators will be working closely with program staff to develop and monitor the data needed for identifying families served by one or both systems. The evaluator or database manager must have demonstrated capabilities to construct queries, maintain a database and perform various database procedures of a database;*
- *Expertise in evaluation design and methods. Local evaluators must have experience designing and conducting longitudinal research that is aligned with research questions and a program logic model/theory of change. Other important experiences include selecting measures, using existing data systems as a source of evaluation information, and collecting data that are reliable and valid;*
- *Skills in user-friendly, accessible reporting and communication with partners and stakeholders. The local evaluator must be able to communicate with and share information with varied audiences, including program staff, administrators, government agency staff members, and policy makers; and*
- *Ability and willingness to collaborate and coordinate with the Family Connection cross-site evaluation data collection efforts. Local evaluators will work closely with program staff at the local sites to ensure that data needed for the national cross-site evaluation is collected and submitted as required. Local evaluators will serve as a liaison between the grantee and the national cross-site evaluation team to ensure timely and accurate data reporting.*

*In their evaluation plans, applicants are expected to:*

- *Incorporate fidelity measurement into program services as part of the process evaluation;*
- *Outline the process and a potential timeline for obtaining IRB approval from one or if needed, multiple agencies; and*
- *Specify how ongoing evaluation findings will be incorporated into the operation of the program to improve or enhance its effectiveness.*

*Applicants must present a plan to conduct a cost analysis. Given the scarce resources available for CW*

*programs and the push to establish cost efficiency measures, programs funded under this FOA are expected to conduct a cost analysis that will provide State, local and tribal policy makers with the information they need to make more thoughtful decisions about resource allocation in their communities. Factors to be considered in this analysis may include, but are not limited to, staff caseloads, supervisor to worker ratios, cost per family or unit of service, training, and consultation costs.*

*Applicants must document their willingness and ability to provide data relevant to their program and local evaluation at specified points in time, incorporate outcome instruments appropriate to their federally-funded service model, and participate in cross-site evaluation training and technical assistance activities, as part of the Family Connection cross-site evaluation under this FOA.*

*Applicants must present plans for evaluating the strategic dissemination of project products and findings to determine whether this was effective in meeting dissemination goals related to project implementation and sustainability, and knowledge transfer in their role as demonstration projects.*

### **Geographic Location**

Describe the precise location of the project and boundaries of the area to be served by the proposed project. Maps or other graphic aids may be attached.

### **Legal Status of Applicant Entity**

Applicants must provide the following documentation of their legal status:

#### **Proof of Non-Profit Status**

Non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations applying for funding are required to submit proof of their non-profit status. Proof of 501(c)(3) non-profit status is any one of the following:

- A reference to the applicant organization's listing in the IRS's most recent list of tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations described in the IRS Code.
- A copy of a currently valid IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exemption certificate.

### **Logic Model**

Applicants are expected to use a model for designing and managing their project. A logic model is a tool that presents the conceptual framework for a proposed project and explains the linkages among program elements. While there are many versions of the logic model, they generally summarize the logical connections among the needs that are the focus of the project, project goals and objectives, the target population, project inputs (resources), the proposed activities/processes/outputs directed toward the target population, the expected short- and long-term outcomes the initiative is designed to achieve, and the evaluation plan for measuring the extent to which proposed processes and outcomes actually occur.

### **Project Sustainability Plan**

Provide a plan for sustainability that details how the proposed project approach will create project self-sufficiency and help to ensure that the impact of the project will continue after Federal assistance has ended. The applicant may include information on plans to secure additional financial resources.

### **Organizational Capacity**

- Organizational charts
- Contact persons and telephone numbers
- Documentation of experience in the program area
- Any other pertinent information the applicant deems relevant.

Provide a biographical sketch or resume for each key person appointed. Resumes should be no more than two pages in length. Job descriptions for each vacant key position should be included as well. As new key staff are appointed, biographical sketches or resumes will also be required.

### **Protection of Sensitive and/or Confidential Information**

If any confidential or sensitive information will be collected during the course of the project, whether from staff (e.g., background investigations) or project participants and/or project beneficiaries, provide a description of the methods that will be used to ensure that confidential and/or sensitive information is properly handled and safeguarded. Also provide a plan for the disposition of such information at the end of the project period.

### **Dissemination Plan**

Provide a plan for distributing reports and other project outputs to colleagues and to the public. Applicants must provide a description of the method, volume, and timing of distribution.

### **Third-Party Agreements**

Provide written and signed agreements between grantees and subgrantees, or subcontractors, or other cooperating entities. These agreements must detail the scope of work to be performed, work schedules, remuneration, and other terms and conditions that structure or define the relationship.

### **The Project Budget and Budget Justification**

All applicants are required to submit a project budget and budget justification with their application. The project budget is input on the Budget Information Standard Form, either SF-424A or SF-424C. The budget justification is a line-item detail that includes detailed calculations for "object class categories" identified on the Budget Information Standard Form. Calculations must include estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. If matching or cost sharing is a requirement, applicants must include a detailed listing of any funding sources identified in Block 18 of the SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance).

Project budget Standard Forms and the budget justification will not count toward page limitations; however, the justification should be no more than 10 single-spaced pages with fonts of no less than 12-points.

***Special Note:*** *The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 (Pub.L. 112-74), enacted December 23, 2011, limits the salary amount that may be awarded and charged to ACF grants and cooperative agreements. Award funds issued under this announcement may not be used to pay the salary, or any percentage of salary, to an individual at a rate in excess of Executive Level II. The Executive Level II salary of the Federal Executive Pay scale is \$179,700 (<http://www.opm.gov/oca/12tables/html/ex.asp>). This amount reflects an individual's base salary **exclusive** of fringe and any income that an individual may be permitted to earn outside of the duties to the applicant organization. This salary limitation also applies to subawards/subcontracts under a ACF grant or cooperative agreement.*

Provide a narrative budget justification for each year of the proposed project. The narrative budget justification should describe how the categorical costs are derived. Discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.

**NOTE:**

*Applicants must provide a detailed budget for each year of the proposed project, and a narrative budget justification for the 1st year of the project. The narrative budget justification must describe how the categorical costs are derived, and must discuss the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of the proposed costs.*

*Applicants must allocate sufficient funds within the 36-month project period, e.g., 15-20 percent of the total project budget, to support the local, site-specific evaluation of their projects and their participation in the Family Connection cross-site evaluation. Funds for evaluation must appear in the budget, and applicants must state the percentage of the total budget that will be allocated to evaluation. Projects are encouraged to set aside sufficient funds for the costs of assessments and instruments needed for screening and measuring well-being outcomes of families, data collection, and dissemination activities, including staff time related to these activities.*

*Applicants must allocate sufficient funds in the budget to provide for the project director, the evaluator and key partners, including the local or State CW agency partner if the grantee is a private organization, to travel to Washington, DC to attend the Kick-off Meeting for funded grantees to be held within the first 3 months of the project (first year only); and the 3-day Annual Grantees Meeting, usually held in the spring.*

**General**

Use the following guidelines for preparing the budget and budget justification. Both Federal and non-Federal resources (when required) shall be detailed and justified in the budget and budget narrative justification. "Federal resources" refers only to the ACF grant funds for which you are applying. "Non-Federal resources" are all other non-ACF Federal and non-Federal resources. It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, Federal budget; next column(s), non-Federal budget(s); and last column, total budget. The budget justification should be in a narrative form.

**Personnel**

Description: Costs of employee salaries and wages.

Justification: Identify the project director or principal investigator, if known at the time of application. For each staff person, provide: the title; time commitment to the project in months; time commitment to the project as a percentage or full-time equivalent; annual salary; grant salary; wage rates; etc. Do not include the costs of consultants, personnel costs of delegate agencies, or of specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

**Fringe Benefits**

Description: Costs of employee fringe benefits unless treated as part of an approved indirect cost rate.

Justification: Provide a breakdown of the amounts and percentages that comprise fringe benefit costs such as health insurance, Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA) taxes, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.

**Travel**



Description: Costs of project-related travel by employees of the applicant organization. (This item does not include costs of consultant travel).

Justification: For each trip show: the total number of traveler(s); travel destination; duration of trip; per diem; mileage allowances, if privately owned vehicles will be used to travel out of town; and other transportation costs and subsistence allowances. If appropriate for this project, travel costs for key staff to attend ACF-sponsored workshops should be detailed in the budget.

## **Equipment**

Description: "Equipment" means an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of: (a) the capitalization level established by the organization for the financial statement purposes, or (b) \$5,000. (Note: Acquisition cost means the net invoice unit price of an item of equipment, including the cost of any modifications, attachments, accessories, or auxiliary apparatus necessary to make it usable for the purpose for which it is acquired. Ancillary charges, such as taxes, duty, protective in-transit insurance, freight, and installation, shall be included in, or excluded from, acquisition cost in accordance with the organization's regular written accounting practices.)

Justification: For each type of equipment requested provide: a description of the equipment; the cost per unit; the number of units; the total cost; and a plan for use on the project; as well as use and/or disposal of the equipment after the project ends. An applicant organization that uses its own definition for equipment should provide a copy of its policy, or section of its policy, that includes the equipment definition.

## **Supplies**

Description: Costs of all tangible personal property other than that included under the Equipment category.

Justification: Specify general categories of supplies and their costs. Show computations and provide other information that supports the amount requested.

## **Contractual**

Description: Costs of all contracts for services and goods except for those that belong under other categories such as equipment, supplies, construction, etc. Include third-party evaluation contracts, if applicable, and contracts with secondary recipient organizations, including delegate agencies and specific project(s) and/or businesses to be financed by the applicant.

Justification: Demonstrate that all procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Recipients and subrecipients, other than States that are required to use 45 C.F.R. Part 92 procedures, must justify any anticipated procurement action that is expected to be awarded without competition and exceeds the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. § 403(11), currently set at \$100,000. Recipients may be required to make pre-award review and procurement documents, such as requests for proposals or invitations for bids, independent cost estimates, etc. available to ACF.

Note: Whenever the applicant intends to delegate part of the project to another agency, the applicant must provide a detailed budget and budget narrative for each delegate agency, by agency title, along with the same supporting information referred to in these instructions.

## **Other**

Description: Enter the total of all other costs. Such costs, where applicable and appropriate, may include but are not limited to: local travel; insurance; food; medical and dental costs (noncontractual); professional services costs; space and equipment rentals; printing and publication; computer use; training costs, such as tuition and stipends; staff development costs; and administrative costs.

Justification: Provide computations, a narrative description and a justification for each cost under this category.

### **Indirect Charges**

Description: Total amount of indirect costs. This category should be used only when the applicant currently has an indirect cost rate approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) or another cognizant Federal agency.

Justification: An applicant that will charge indirect costs to the grant must enclose a copy of the current rate agreement. If the applicant organization is in the process of initially developing or renegotiating a rate, upon notification that an award will be made, it should immediately develop a tentative indirect cost rate proposal based on its most recently completed fiscal year, in accordance with the cognizant agency's guidelines for establishing indirect cost rates, and submit it to the cognizant agency. Applicants awaiting approval of their indirect cost proposals may also request indirect costs. When an indirect cost rate is requested, those costs included in the indirect cost pool should not be charged as direct costs to the grant. Also, if the applicant is requesting a rate that is less than what is allowed under the program, the authorized representative of the applicant organization must submit a signed acknowledgement that the applicant is accepting a lower rate than allowed.

### **Program Income**

Description: The estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project.

Justification: Describe the nature, source and anticipated use of program income in the budget or refer to the pages in the application that contain this information.

### **Commitment of Non-Federal Resources**

Description: Amounts of non-Federal resources that will be used to support the project as identified in Block 18 of the SF-424.

Justification: If an applicant is relying on match from a third party, then a firm commitment of these resources (letter(s) or other documentation) is required to be submitted with the application. Detailed budget information must be provided for every funding source identified in Item 18. "Estimated Funding (\$)" on the SF-424.

**Note:** Applicants are required to fully identify and document in their applications the specific costs or contributions they propose in order to meet a matching or cost-sharing requirement. Applicants are also required to provide documentation in their applications on the sources of funding or contribution(s) and, for in-kind contributions, a justification of how the stated valuation was determined. A grantee's failure to provide the required matching amount will result in the disallowance of Federal funds.

### **Paperwork Reduction Disclaimer**

As required by the Paperwork Reduction Act, 44 U.S.C. §§ 3501-3520, the public reporting burden for the Project Description is estimated to average 40 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection information. The Project Description information collection is approved under OMB control number 0970-0139, which expires 11/30/2012. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

## Application Submission Options

### Electronic Submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)

- Electronic applications must be submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) by 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- A DUNS Number and current registration at the Central Contractor Registry (CCR) are required. DUNS and CCR registration are part of the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) registration process. See “Get Registered” at [http://grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp).
- ACF will not accept applications via facsimile or email.
- The electronic application can be downloaded from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).
- It is to an applicant's advantage to submit their applications **at least 24 hours** in advance of the application due date and time in order to correct any failures found during the application validation check.
- Electronic submission at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) is two-step process:
  - Submission by the due date and time; and
  - Application validation check.
- Electronically submitted applications will not pass the validation check at Grants.gov if the AOR does not have a current CCR registration and electronic signature credentials.
- **Read and observe all application submission requirements provided at [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply\\_for\\_grants.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp).**
- Observe the formatting requirements and page limitations provided in the *Section IV.2. Formatting ACF Applications* section for electronic applications.
- Carefully read and observe electronic file naming conventions provided in the application submission instructions at [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply\\_for\\_grants.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp).
- Use only file formats supported by ACF. See *Section IV.2. Formatting ACF Applications*.
- Additional guidance on the submission of electronic applications can be found at <http://www.grants.gov/assets/Organization Steps Complete Registration.pdf>.
- If applicants encounter any technical difficulties in using [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), contact the Grants.gov Contact Center at: 1-800-518-4726, or by email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov), to report the problem and obtain assistance. Hours of Operation: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Grants.gov Contact Center is closed on Federal holidays.
- Applicants should retain Grants.gov Contact Center service ticket number(s) as they may be needed for future reference.
- Applicants that submit their applications electronically should retain a hard copy of their application package.
- **Contact with the Grants.gov Contact Center prior to the listed due date and time does not ensure acceptance of your application. If difficulties are encountered, the Grants Management Officer listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* will determine whether the submission issues are due to Grants.gov system errors or user error.**

### Application Validation at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov)

After an applicant submits an application; Grants.gov generates a submission receipt via email and also sets the application status to "Received." This receipt verifies the application has been successfully

delivered to the Grants.gov system.

Next, Grants.gov verifies the submission is valid by ensuring it does not contain viruses, the funding opportunity announcement is still open, and that the applicant login and applicant DUNS number match. If the submission is valid, Grants.gov generates a submission validation receipt via email and sets the application status to "Validated."

If the application is not validated, the application status is set to "Rejected." The system sends a rejection email notification to the applicant and the applicant must re-submit the application package. See ["What to Expect After Submitting"](#) at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

Each time an application is submitted, or re-submitted, via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the application will receive a new date and time stamp. Only those applications with on-time date and time stamps, which result in a validated application and are transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

### **Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission**

ACF recognizes that some applicants may have limited or no Internet access, and/or limited computer capacity, which may prohibit them from uploading large files to the Internet at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). To accommodate such applicants, ACF offers an exemption from required electronic submission. The exemption will allow applicants to submit hard copy, paper applications by hand-delivery, applicant courier, overnight/express mail couriers, or by other representatives of the applicant.

To receive an exemption from required electronic application submission, applicants must submit a written request to ACF stating that the applicant qualifies for the exemption for one of two reasons:

- Lack of Internet access or Internet connection, or
- Limited computer capacity that prevents the uploading of large documents (files) to the Internet at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov).

Applicants may request and receive the exemption from required electronic application submission by either:

- Submitting an email request to [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov), or
- Sending a written request to the Office of Grants Management Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* in this announcement.

An exemption is applicable to all applications submitted by the applicant organization during the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) in which it is received. Applicants need only request an exemption once in a FFY. Applicants will need to request a new exemption from required electronic submission for any succeeding FFY.

**Please Note:** [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov) may be used only to request an exemption from required application submission. All other inquiries must be directed to the appropriate Agency Contact listed in *Section VII.* of this announcement. Queries submitted to this email address that make requests for any reason other than a request for an exemption will not be acknowledged or answered.

Exemption requests by email to [electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:electronicappexemption@acf.hhs.gov) and by postal mail must include:

- Funding Opportunity Announcement Title,

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON),
- The listed Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number,
- Name of Applicant Organization and DUNS Number,
- AOR name and contact information,
- Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving the application, and
- The reason for which the applicant is requesting an exemption from electronic application submission. The reason must be either the lack of Internet access or connection, or lack of computer capacity that prevents uploading large documents (files) to the Internet.

Exemption requests must be ***received by*** ACF no later than two weeks before the application due date, that is, 14 calendar days prior to the application due date listed in the *Overview* and in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*. If the fourteenth calendar day falls on a weekend or Federal holiday, the due date for receipt of an exemption request will move to the next Federal business day that follows the weekend or Federal holiday.

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* of this announcement.

### **Paper Format Application Submission**

**An exemption is now required for the submission of paper applications. See "*Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*."**

Applicants with exemptions that submit their applications in paper format, by mail or delivery, must submit one original and two copies of the complete application with all attachments. The original and each of the two copies must include all required forms, certifications, assurances, and appendices, be signed by the AOR, and be unbound. The original copy of the application must have original signature(s). See *Section IV.6* of this announcement for address information for paper format application submissions.

Applications submitted in paper format must show a DUNS Number. A DUNS Number is a nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. (D&B) to uniquely identify business entities. A DUNS number may be acquired at no cost online at <http://www.dnb.com>. To acquire a DUNS number by phone, contact the D&B Government Customer Response Center: U.S. and U.S Virgin Islands: 1-866-705-5711; Alaska and Puerto Rico: 1-800-234-3867 (Select Option 2, then Option 1). Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., CST.

As of October 1, 2010, all applicants for Federal grants and cooperative agreements, including those that apply in paper format, are required to have Central Contractor Registration (CCR). CCR registration is also required for organizations that will receive subawards under Federal grants and cooperative agreements. CCR registration may be made online at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov) or by phone at 1-866-606-8220.

CCR registration must be updated annually from the date of the initial registration. CCR registration is required to be active throughout the period of award. Lack of CCR registration will prevent ACF from making an award to a recommended applicant.

**There is the possibility of heavy traffic at the CCR website on application due dates. Applicants are strongly encouraged to register at the CCR well in advance of the application due date. CCR registration must be active and maintained with current information at all times during which an organization has an active award or an application under consideration.**

Applicants may refer to *Section VIII. Other Information* for a checklist of application requirements that may be used in developing and organizing application materials. Details concerning acknowledgment of received applications are available in *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times* in this announcement.

#### **IV.3. Submission Dates and Times**

Due Date for Applications: **07/16/2012**

##### **Explanation of Due Dates**

The due date for receipt of applications is listed in the *Overview* section and in this section. See *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*.

##### **Electronic Applications**

The deadline for submission of electronic applications via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) is 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date. Electronic applications submitted at 12:00 a.m., ET, on the day after the due date will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Applicants are required to submit their applications electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) unless they received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

ACF does not accommodate transmission of applications by email or facsimile.

Instructions for electronic submission via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are available at [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply\\_for\\_grants.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp).

##### **Please note:**

Applications submitted to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) at any time during the open application period, and prior to the due date and time that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be received at ACF. **These applications will not be acknowledged.** Applications that fail the Grants.gov validation check will not be transmitted to ACF though they may have been submitted on time.

Each time an application is submitted via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the application will receive a new date and time-stamp. Only those applications with date and time-stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

##### **Mailed Paper Format Applications**

The deadline for mailed paper applications is 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date. Mailed paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

##### **Hand-Delivered Paper Format Applications**

Applications that are hand-delivered by applicants, applicant couriers, by overnight/express mail couriers, or other representatives of the applicant must be received on, or before, the due date listed in the *Overview*

and in this section. These applications must be delivered between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., ET, Monday through Friday (excluding Federal holidays). Applications should be delivered to the address provided in *Section IV.6. Other Submission Requirements*.

Hand-delivered paper applications received after the due date and deadline time will be considered late and will be disqualified from competitive review and from funding under this announcement.

Hand-delivered paper format application submissions will be disqualified if the applicant organization has not received an exemption through the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

**No appeals will be considered for applications classified as late under the following circumstances:**

- Applications submitted electronically via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) are considered late when they are dated and time-stamped after the deadline of 11:59 p.m., ET, on the due date.
- Paper format applications received by mail or hand-delivery after 4:30 p.m., ET, on the due date will be classified as late and will be disqualified.
- Paper format applications received from applicant organizations that were not approved for an exemption from required electronic application submission under the process described in *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Submission* will be disqualified.

**Extensions and/or Waiving Due Date and Receipt Time Requirements**

ACF may extend an application due date and receipt time when circumstances make it impossible for applicants to submit their applications on time. These events include natural disasters (floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc.), or when there are widespread disruptions of electrical service, or mail service, or in other rare cases. The determination to extend or waive due date and/or receipt time requirements rests with the Grants Management Officer listed as the Office of Grants Management Contact in *Section VII. Agency Contacts*.

**Acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) of an electronic application's submission:**

Applicants will receive an initial email upon submission of their application to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). This email will provide a **Grants.gov Tracking Number**. Applicants should refer to this tracking number in all communication with Grants.gov. The email will also provide a **date and time stamp**, which serves as the official record of the application's submission. The date and time-stamp must reflect a submission time on, or before, 11:59 p.m., ET, on the application due date. Receipt of this email does not indicate that the application is accepted or that it has passed the validation check.

Each time an application is submitted, or resubmitted, via [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), the application will receive a new date and time-stamp. Only those applications with on-time date and time-stamps that result in a validated application, which is transmitted to ACF, will be acknowledged.

Applicants will be provided with an acknowledgement from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) that the submitted application package has passed, or failed, a series of checks and validations. Applications that are submitted on time that fail the validation check will not be transmitted to ACF and will not be acknowledged.

See "[What to Expect After Submitting](#)" at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) for more information.

**Acknowledgement from ACF of an electronic application's submission:**



Applicants will be sent additional email(s) from ACF acknowledging that the application has been retrieved from [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) by ACF. Receipt of these emails is not an indication that the application is accepted for competition.

**Acknowledgement from ACF of a paper format (hard copy) application's submission:**

ACF will not provide acknowledgement of receipt of hard copy application packages submitted via mail or courier services.

#### **IV.4. Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs**

This program is covered under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," and 45 CFR Part 100, "Intergovernmental Review of Department of Health and Human Services Programs and Activities." Under the Executive Order, States may design their own processes for reviewing and commenting on proposed Federal assistance under covered programs.

Applicants should go to the following URL for the official list of the jurisdictions that have elected to participate in E.O. 12372 [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_spoc/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc/).

Applicants from participating jurisdictions should contact their SPOC, as soon as possible, to alert them of their prospective applications and to receive instructions on their jurisdiction's procedures. Applicants must submit all required application materials to the SPOC and indicate the date of submission on the Standard Form (SF) 424 at item 19.

Under 45 CFR 100.8(a)(2), a SPOC has 60 days from the application due date to comment on proposed new awards.

SPOC comments may be submitted directly to ACF to: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Grants Management, Division of Discretionary Grants, 370 L'Enfant Promenade SW., 6th Floor East, Washington, DC 20447.

Entities that meet the eligibility requirements of this announcement are still eligible to apply for a grant even if a State, Territory or Commonwealth, etc., does not have a SPOC or has chosen not to participate in the process. Applicants from non-participating jurisdictions need take no action with regard to E.O. 12372. Applications from Federally-recognized Indian Tribal governments are not subject to E.O. 12372.

#### **IV.5. Funding Restrictions**

Costs of organized fund raising, including financial campaigns, endowment drives, solicitation of gifts and bequests, and similar expenses incurred solely to raise capital or obtain contributions, are considered unallowable costs under grants or cooperative agreements awarded under this funding opportunity announcement.

Grant awards will not allow reimbursement of pre-award costs.

Construction is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

Purchase of real property is not an allowable activity or expenditure under this grant award.

#### **IV.6. Other Submission Requirements**

Submit paper applications to one of the following addresses. See *Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*.

**Submission By Mail**

CB Operations Center c/o Lux Consulting Group  
8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

**Hand Delivery**

CB Operations Center c/o Lux Consulting Group  
8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

**Electronic Submission**

See *Section IV.2* for application requirements and for guidance when submitting applications electronically via <http://www.Grants.gov>.

For all submissions, see *Section IV.3* for information on due dates and times.

**V. Application Review Information****V.1. Criteria**

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated using the criteria described in this section. The corresponding point values indicate the relative importance placed on each review criterion. Points will be allocated based on the extent to which the application proposal addresses each of the criteria listed. Applicants should address these criteria in their application materials, particularly in the project description and budget justification, as they are the basis upon which competing applications will be judged during the objective review. The required elements of the project description and budget justification may be found in *Section IV.2* of this announcement.

**OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS FOR ASSISTANCE****Maximum Points: 20**

In reviewing the objectives and need for assistance, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The application demonstrates an understanding of key issues relevant to this FOA. (0-4 points)
  - The applicant presents a thorough review of the relevant literature, including knowledge of protective factors and their importance as a means to foster well-being and support healthy, positive functioning in children, youth and families. The review reflects a clear understanding of the research on best practices and promising approaches as it relates to the proposed project, and sets a sound rationale for the project in the context of the FOA; and
  - The applicant demonstrates a clear understanding of the need to develop knowledge in the field about the effectiveness of KN programs in helping caregivers of children/youth, who are in, or at-risk of entering, foster care, access needed services to address the well-being of the child and family, necessary for achieving and maintaining permanency.
2. The application presents a clear description of the proposed project which is responsive to this FOA. (0-16 points)
  - The applicant clearly identifies and describes the population to be served by the project as kinship families served by CW agencies and those served or potentially served by TANF agencies. The applicant demonstrates a thorough understanding of the needs of the target population, identifies specific issues/challenges in engaging and serving kinship caregiver families in the targeted service area, and responds to these appropriately, in terms of project requirements defined in this FOA;

- The applicant clearly defines and justifies the geographic location to be served by the project, based on factors such as the key socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the targeted community as they relate to the KN program. The applicant presents clear justification that the estimated number of children and families in the target population to be served by the project is reasonable and appropriate;
- The applicant identifies and demonstrates a thorough understanding of systemic and service issues related to the CW and TANF systems, and responds to these appropriately, including policies and family-centered practices related to kinship caregivers' eligibility, and availability of needed services in the targeted geographic location; and
- The applicant demonstrates a strong understanding of why the CW/TANF collaborative approach to KN programs would be beneficial in improving outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being for the target population.

## **APPROACH**

**Maximum Points: 40**

In reviewing the approach, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The applicant proposes a sound technical approach for the proposed project. (0-9 points)
  - The applicant outlines a clear plan of action that describes the scope and detail of how the proposed work will be accomplished, which accounts for all functions or activities identified in the application, states reasons for taking the proposed approach rather than others, and describes any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, reductions in cost or time, or extraordinary social and community involvement;
  - The applicant presents a well-defined logic model which guides the proposed project. The logic model demonstrates strong links between proposed inputs and activities and intended short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. This includes a clear articulation of the connection between the needs of the target population, the core components of the service delivery approach, and desired outcomes (i.e., theory of change); and
  - The applicant clearly bases the proposed plan on meaningful consultation and input from kinship caregivers in the designated service area, as well as from organizations representing kinship caregivers, youth raised by kinship caregivers, relevant government agencies, and relevant community-based or faith-based organizations.
2. The applicant's proposal is strongly responsive to the purposes and requirements of KN programs under this FOA. (0-8 points)
  - The applicant clearly describes the criteria to be used for referring a family to the KN program, while addressing the unique needs and circumstances for the target population and community;
  - The applicant proposes an assessment process that will thoroughly address the child and caregiver domains of well-being which relate to improved outcomes for the target population under this FOA;
  - The applicant clearly describes the KN interventions to be delivered, including information and referral systems and other means; thoroughly describes how these are culturally competent; and details the approach(es) to engage the target population and assist kinship caregivers to learn about, find and use existing programs and services to meet their own needs and the needs of the children they are raising; and
  - The applicant clearly demonstrates how it will address challenges for kinship caregiver families in identifying and accessing needed services in the targeted service area, and specifies reasonable approaches to address these effectively.
3. The applicant demonstrates its commitment to use funds for only allowable activities. (0-3 points)

- The applicant's written statement describing its commitment to use funds for only allowable activities is clear and specific. For example, the statement directly includes references of a commitment that funds will only be used for the activities identified in the FOA;
  - Applicants which are current recipients of Federal, State, or local financial assistance have clearly described how they will ensure that any awarded funds from this FOA will not be used to supplant or augment any other funding; and
  - The applicant presents a sound plan, in compliance with funding restrictions under this FOA, for continuing this project and sustaining improved practice in collaborative KN programs beyond the period of Federal funding.
4. The applicant presents a clear and convincing plan for the proposed project to identify and engage one or both of the following sub-groups of the target population, in order to provide the following services. (0-4 points)
- KN services for caregivers who are not known to the CW or TANF agencies, where children have been informally placed with relatives; and/or
  - Intensive KN services for caregivers of children who are identified as being at risk of entering or re-entering foster care.
5. The application clearly demonstrates how the proposed project will use the collaborative CW/TANF approach to improve outcomes of KN programs. (0-7 points)
- The applicant thoroughly demonstrates a strong plan of collaboration between the CW and TANF agencies, documented by a Third-Party Agreement(s), in order to plan, prepare, and implement or expand the proposed KN program;
  - The applicant provides strong documentation that there is a meaningful agreement(s) in place between the CW and TANF agencies to coordinate and share referrals, information, and data on families served by the proposed program, and to maintain and respect confidentiality; and
  - The applicant presents a strong plan for the CW and TANF agencies to further collaborate with other public and private agencies, including community-based and faith-based organizations, to promote service coordination, to identify and facilitate access to an array of needed services identified through the KN program for the target population of kinship families, and to avoid duplication or fragmentation of services to kinship care families. The applicant presents a feasible plan to maintain the active involvement of collaborating entities on an ongoing basis in order to identify and address challenges in the planning and operation of the proposed KN program; and
6. The applicant proposes a project that would inform the field. (0-9 points)
- The design of the proposed project clearly reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and literature. The applicant clearly documents how the proposed project is innovative; and involves strategies that build on, or are an alternative to, existing strategies; and, if successfully implemented and evaluated, is likely to contribute to the knowledge base around collaborative KN programs;
  - The applicant demonstrates clearly how the proposed project would develop into a model site for other jurisdictions to look to in developing the ability to implement similar programs as an ongoing part of agency functions. The project would develop high quality products and provide detailed information on strategies used and the outcomes achieved that would support evidence-based improvements of practices in the field. The schedule for developing these products is clearly appropriate in scope and budget; and
  - The applicant clearly describes the intended audience (e.g., researchers, policymakers, practitioners) for product dissemination, which is clearly appropriate to the goals of the proposed project. The project's products would be very useful to the identified audiences; the plan for disseminating information is clearly appropriate; and the mechanisms and forums that would be used to convey the information and support replication by other interested agencies are clearly

appropriate. The proposed dissemination plan is clearly appropriate in scope and budget.

## EVALUATION

**Maximum Points: 20**

In reviewing the proposed plan, reviewers will consider the extent to which the evaluation is expected to yield findings which show that the project has achieved its stated objectives, that the accomplishment of objectives can be attributed to the project, and that the applicant is cognizant that results from randomized control studies provide the most compelling evidence of causal links between interventions and outcomes.

Reviewers will consider how well or to what extent:

1. The applicant proposes a strong evaluation plan. (0-9 points)

- The plan describes a clear and convincing plan for evaluating the project, and satisfies the evaluation requirements published in this FOA. The methods of evaluation are clearly feasible, within the timeline for the 36-month project period; comprehensive; and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and context of the project. The evaluation plan is strongly guided by the project's logic model;
- The applicant presents a strong plan for the process evaluation to assess the linkages between the collaborative partners that will help ensure that identified needs of children, youth and families are met. The plan is likely to yield substantive and useful information on the level of coordination between the collaborating agencies, as well as the proposed project and other programs with similar systems/services, or that serve the same population;
- The applicant proposes a rigorous, realistic, and feasible design to measure achievement of project objectives, to ensure fidelity to the intervention, the efficiency of the implementation processes, and the impact of the project on outcomes for the target population. The design is appropriate to the population, proposed intervention, and potential comparison groups;
- The plan clearly outlines an appropriate sampling plan that ensures sample sizes sufficient to detect significant effects. The target sample represents the intended recipients of the services to the greatest extent possible given the project's structure and resources;
- The plan clearly includes an appropriate control or comparison group for determining the influence of the project activities on outcomes. If not utilizing a randomized control approach, the applicant provides a reasonable description and justification that the proposed evaluation design is the most rigorous design possible for addressing the questions of interest. If non-randomized approaches are used, the applicant provides evidence of the equivalence to the intervention group of any comparison groups that will be employed. Preliminary outcome evaluation design is sufficiently rigorous to provide credible evidence that the effects on key outcomes related to safety, permanency and well-being, including relevant child well-being outcomes, can be attributed to the CW/TANF collaborative KN program;
- The evaluation design includes a clearly defined screening assessment protocol for kinship caregivers to determine eligibility for the KN program, and the assessment process includes a sound plan for determining which kinship caregivers need more intensive services;
- The applicant presents an effective outreach plan to contact and locate kinship caregivers, providing incentives if necessary, for caregivers to provide necessary follow up data, including a clear plan to follow up with caregivers at a 6-month and 12-month intervals to ensure that appropriate services and desired outcomes were achieved;
- The applicant provides a realistic plan to create a culture within the agencies and providers to support the evaluation to be conducted, including clearly defined procedures to support the collection of meaningful data with fidelity; and
- The applicant presents a reasonable plan to evaluate the extent to which strategic dissemination of project products and findings to target audiences was effective (information was received by the intended audiences and used as intended), and to assess the impact of dissemination in supporting

project implementation and sustainability and knowledge transfer in their role as a demonstration project.

2. The applicant proposes a strong plan for data collection, analysis and reporting. (0-7 points)

- The application clearly describes a sound plan for collecting high-quality data on the services provided, the costs of these services, and the outcomes of these services;
- The applicant provides clear and detailed evidence that commitments have been secured, via a data sharing agreement(s), to access administrative CW data necessary to allow for a refined identification and assessment of the needs of the target population and to track child welfare outcomes;
- The applicant's evaluation plan thoroughly addresses how the following types of data will be collected: Demographic and characteristic information on families being served by kin caregivers; assessments of the child/youth and family that address services required to support the safety, permanency and well-being of the child/youth; service utilization data as a result of accessing KN services; assistance or services received from the CW and/or TANF agencies; data on well-being outcomes or changes in protective factors that are related to child and family well-being; numbers and types of organizational activities to support collaboration on KN services for the target population;
- The applicant clearly identifies methods of evaluation that include the use of strong measures which are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the program as identified in the project logic model. The evaluation includes clearly defined measures of outcomes, in addition to measures of inputs and outputs. The measures are objective and have strong reliability, validity, and internal consistency. There is a sound plan for securing informed consent and implementing an IRB review;
- The proposed evaluation will thoroughly analyze the data to examine the effectiveness of the implementation process and outcomes related to the provision of CW/TANF collaborative KN services;
- The applicant provides an appropriate, feasible, and realistic plan for using evaluation findings to produce ongoing documentation of project activities and results. The evaluation plan clearly includes performance feedback and periodic assessment of program progress that can be used to modify the program, as necessary, and serve as a basis for program adjustments; and
- The application clearly describes a sound plan for conducting a cost analysis of the proposed program, lists the factors that would be considered in this analysis, and describes the plan for comparing the program to other similar programs with respect to these factors.

3. The applicant demonstrates sufficient capacity to conduct a rigorous evaluation. (0-4 points)

- The applicant either demonstrates clearly that it has the in-house capacity to conduct an objective and rigorous evaluation of the project or presents a sound plan for contracting with a third-party evaluator; and
- The applicant provides strong documentation that the proposed evaluator has extensive experience with research and/or evaluation of this nature, clearly understands the population of interest, and demonstrates the necessary independence from the project to assure objectivity.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILES**

**Maximum Points: 15**

In reviewing the organizational profiles, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The application strongly documents the ability of the applicant and partnering organizations to conduct a project of the type specified under this FOA, within the project period of 36 months. (0-8 points)

- The applicant provides strong evidence of sufficient experience and expertise in the program areas of this announcement; in collaboration with partner organizations; in culturally competent



service delivery; and in administration, development, implementation, management, and evaluation of similar projects;

- The proposed project director and key project staff clearly possess sufficient relevant knowledge, experience, and capabilities to implement and manage a project of this size, scope, and complexity effectively, as documented, e.g. with resumes;
- The applicant presents a sound management plan for achieving the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities for accomplishing project tasks and ensuring quality. The plan clearly describes the effective management and coordination of activities carried out by any partners, subcontractors, and consultants (if appropriate); and
- The applicant documents clearly the role, responsibilities, and time commitments of each proposed project staff position, including consultants, subcontractors, and/or partners. These are well defined and appropriate to the successful implementation of the proposed project with respect to the target population.

2. The application clearly demonstrates systemic capacity to effectively implement the proposed project by strongly documenting the commitment of the applicant organization and any partnering organizations, and their staff to provide CW/TANF collaborative KN services. (0-7 points)

- If the lead applicant is not the CW agency, there is clear documentation, via detailed Third-Party Agreements and any other evidence, of a strong partnership with the relevant CW agency(ies), as well as strong collaboration with the TANF agency(ies) in the targeted geographical area(s);
- The applicant provides a comprehensive list of community organizations, cooperating entities, consultants, or other key individuals who will work on the project, along with a short description of the nature of their effort or contribution. This plan includes, where appropriate, Third-Party Agreements from identified partners; and
- The applicant provides strong documentation that each participating organization (including partners and/or subcontractors) clearly possesses the organizational capability to fulfill their assigned roles and functions effectively in serving the target populations.

## **BUDGET AND BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

**Maximum Points: 5**

In reviewing the budget and budget justification, reviewers will consider the extent to which:

1. The application includes a clear, detailed budget for each year of the proposed project, and a clear, comprehensive narrative/justification for the costs outlined for the 1st year of the project. (0-4 points)

- The costs of the proposed project are necessary, reasonable and commensurate with the types and range of activities and services to be conducted, the number of participants to be served, and the expected goals and objectives;
- Funds which are specified are allowable and will not supplant or augment any other funding;
- The application clearly identifies funds for all required items for the project budget, including travel to attend the Kick-off Meeting and annual Grantees Meeting in Washington, DC; and
- The budget includes a specific, reasonable percentage of funds to be set aside for the purpose of evaluation, and provides a convincing rationale to justify this. Sufficient resources are allocated to the evaluation activities to implement a design with appropriate comparison group(s), to include process and cost evaluation components, and to participate fully in the Family Connection cross-site evaluation.

2. The applicant's fiscal controls and accounting procedures would ensure prudent use, proper and timely disbursement and accurate accounting of funds received under this FOA. (0-1 points)

## **V.2. Review and Selection Process**



No grant award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. No grant award will be made to an applicant that does not have an active CCR registration ([www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov) or 1-866-606-8220).

### **Initial ACF Screening**

Each application will be screened to determine whether it meets one of the following disqualification criteria as described in *Section III.3. Application Disqualification Factors*:

- Applications that are designated as late according to *Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times*,
- Applications that are submitted in paper format without prior approval of an exemption from required electronic submission (*Section IV.2. Request an Exemption from Required Electronic Application Submission*), or
- Applications with requests that exceed the award ceiling stated in *Section II. Award Information*.

For those applications that have been disqualified under the initial ACF screening, notice will be provided by postal mail or by email. See *Section IV.3. Explanation of Due Dates* for information on Grants.gov's and ACF's acknowledgment of received applications.

### **Objective Review and Results**

Applications competing for financial assistance will be reviewed and evaluated by objective review panels using the criteria described in *Section V.1. Criteria* of this announcement. Each panel is composed of experts with knowledge and experience in the area under review. Generally, review panels include three reviewers and one chairperson.

Results of the competitive objective review are taken into consideration by ACF in the selection of projects for funding; however, objective review scores and rankings are not binding. They are one element in the decision-making process.

ACF may elect not to fund applicants with management or financial problems that would indicate an inability to successfully complete the proposed project. Applications may be funded in whole or in part. Successful applicants may be funded at an amount lower than that requested. ACF reserves the right to consider preferences to fund organizations serving emerging, unserved, or under-served populations, including those populations located in pockets of poverty. ACF will also consider the geographic distribution of Federal funds in its award decisions.

Please refer to *Section IV.2.* of this announcement for information on non-Federal reviewers in the review process.

### **Approved but Unfunded Applications**

Applications recommended for approval that were not funded under the competition because of the lack of available funds may be held over by ACF and reconsidered in a subsequent review cycle if a future competition under the program area is planned. These applications will be held over for a period of up to one year and will be re-competed for funding with all other competing applications in the next available review cycle. For those applications that have been deemed as approved but unfunded, notice will be given of such determination by postal mail.

## **V.3. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates**

Applications will be reviewed during the Summer 2012. Funded projects will have a start date no later than September 30, 2012.

## **VI. Award Administration Information**

### **VI.1. Award Notices**

Successful applicants will be notified through the issuance of a Notice of Award (NoA) that sets forth the amount of funds granted, the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant, the budget period for which initial support will be given, the non-Federal share to be provided (if applicable), and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The NoA will be signed by the Grants Officer and transmitted via postal mail or email. Following the finalization of funding decisions, organizations whose applications will not be funded will be notified by letter signed by the cognizant Program Office head. Any other correspondence that announces to a Principal Investigator, or a Project Director, that an application was selected is not an authorization to begin performance.

Project costs that are incurred prior to the receipt of the NoA are at the recipient's risk and may be reimbursed only to the extent that they are considered allowable as approved pre-award costs. Information on allowable pre-award costs and the time period under which they may be incurred is available in *Section IV.5. Funding Restrictions*.

### **VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the uniform administrative requirements and cost principles of 45 C.F.R. Part 74 (Awards And Subawards To Institutions Of Higher Education, Hospitals, Other Nonprofit Organizations, And Commercial Organizations) or 45 C.F.R. Part 92 (Grants And Cooperative Agreements To State, Local, And Tribal Governments). The Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) is available at <http://www.gpo.gov>.

An application funded with the release of Federal funds through a grant award does not constitute, or imply, compliance with Federal regulations. Funded organizations are responsible for ensuring that their activities comply with all applicable Federal regulations.

#### **Prohibition Against Profit**

Grantees are subject to the limitations set forth in 45 C.F.R. Part 74, Subpart E-Special Provisions for Awards to Commercial Organizations (45 C.F.R. Part 74.81\_Prohibition against profit), which states that, "... no HHS funds may be paid as profit to any recipient even if the recipient is a commercial organization. Profit is any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs."

#### **Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations**

Grantees are also subject to the requirements of 45 C.F.R. Part 87.1(c), Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which says, "Organizations that receive direct financial assistance from the [Health and Human Services] Department under any Department program may not engage in inherently religious activities such as religious instruction, worship, or proselytization as part of the programs or services funded with direct financial assistance from the Department." Therefore, organizations must take steps to completely separate the presentation of any program with religious content from the presentation of the Federally funded program by time or location *in such a way that it is clear that the two programs are separate and distinct*. If separating the two programs by time but presenting them in the same location, one program must *completely* end before the other program begins.

A faith-based organization receiving HHS funds retains its independence from Federal, State, and local governments, and may continue to carry out its mission, including the definition, practice, and expression of its religious beliefs. For example, a faith-based organization may use space in its facilities to provide secular programs or services funded with Federal funds without removing religious art, icons, scriptures, or other religious symbols. In addition, a faith-based organization that receives Federal funds retains its authority over its internal governance, and it may retain religious terms in its organization's name, select its board members on a religious basis, and include religious references in its organization's mission statements and other governing documents in accordance with all program requirements, statutes, and other applicable requirements governing the conduct of HHS funded activities.

Regulations pertaining to the Equal Treatment for Faith-Based Organizations, which includes the prohibition against Federal funding of inherently religious activities, "Understanding the Regulations Related to the Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships Initiative" are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/about/regulations/>. Additional information, resources, and tools for faith-based organizations is available through The Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships website at <http://www.hhs.gov/partnerships/index.html> and at the [Administration for Children & Families: Toolkit for Faith-based and Community Organizations](#).

### **Award Term and Condition under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000**

Awards issued under this announcement are subject to the requirements of Section 106 (g) of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, as amended (22 U.S.C. § 7104). For the full text of the award term, go to [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award\\_term.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/award_term.html). If you are unable to access this link, please contact the Grants Management Contact identified in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement to obtain a copy of the term.

### **Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace**

The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 U.S.C. § 8102 et seq.) requires that all organizations receiving grants from any Federal agency agree to maintain a drug-free workplace. By signing the application, the Authorizing Official agrees that the grantee will provide a drug-free workplace and will comply with the requirement to notify ACF if an employee is convicted of violating a criminal drug statute. Failure to comply with these requirements may be cause for debarment. Government wide requirements for Drug-Free Workplace for Financial Assistance are found in 2 C.F.R. part 182; HHS implementing regulations are set forth in 2 C.F.R. part 382.400. All recipients of ACF grant funds must comply with the requirements in Subpart B - Requirements for Recipients Other Than Individuals, 2 C.F.R. part 382.225. The rule is available at [Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace](#).

### **Debarment and Suspension**

HHS regulations published in 2 CFR part 376 implement the governmentwide debarment and suspension system guidance (2 CFR part 180) for HHS' non-procurement programs and activities. "Non-procurement transactions" include, among other things, grants, cooperative agreements, scholarships, fellowships, and loans. ACF implements the HHS Debarment and Suspension regulations as a term and condition of award. Grantees may decide the method and frequency by which this determination is made and may check the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) located at <https://www.epls.gov/>, although checking the EPLS is not required. More information is available at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants\\_resources.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html).

### **Pro-Children Act**

The Pro-Children Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. §§ 7181 through 7184, imposes restrictions on smoking in facilities where federally funded children's services are provided. HHS grants are subject to these requirements only if they meet the Act's specified coverage. The Act specifies that smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of kindergarten, elementary, or secondary education or library services to children under the age of 18. In addition, smoking is prohibited in any indoor facility or portion of a facility (owned, leased, or contracted for) used for the routine or regular provision of federally funded health care, day care, or early childhood development, including Head Start services to children under the age of 18. The statutory prohibition also applies if such facilities are constructed, operated, or maintained with Federal funds. The statute does not apply to children's services provided in private residences, facilities funded solely by Medicare or Medicaid funds, portions of facilities used for inpatient drug or alcohol treatment, or facilities where WIC coupons are redeemed. Failure to comply with the provisions of the law may result in the imposition of a civil monetary penalty of up to \$1,000 per violation and/or the imposition of an administrative compliance order on the responsible entity.

## **HHS Grants Policy Statement**

The HHS Grants Policy Statement (HHS GPS) is the Department of Health and Human Services' single policy guide for discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. ACF grant awards are subject to the requirements of the HHS GPS, which covers basic grants processes, standard terms and conditions, and points of contact, as well as important agency-specific requirements. Appendices to the HHS GPS include a glossary of terms and a list of standard abbreviations for ease of reference. The general terms and conditions in the HHS GPS will apply as indicated unless there are statutory, regulatory, or award-specific requirements to the contrary that are specified in the Notice of Award (NoA). The HHS GPS is available [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants\\_related.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_related.html).

### **VI.3. Reporting**

Grantees under this funding opportunity announcement will be required to submit performance progress and financial reports periodically throughout the project period. The frequency of required reporting is listed later in this section. Final reports may be submitted in hard copy to the Grants Management Office Contact listed in *Section VII. Agency Contacts* of this announcement. Instructions on submission of reports electronically will be provided with award documents.

#### **Performance Progress Reports (PPR)**

ACF grantees are required to submit the SF-PPR Cover Page. ACF Program Offices that utilize reporting forms or formats in addition to, or instead of, the SF-PPR have listed the reporting requirements later in this section.

Grant award documents will inform grantees of the appropriate performance progress report form or format to use. Grantees should consult their award documents to determine the appropriate performance progress report format required under their award. Performance progress reports are due 30 days after the end of the reporting period.

Final program performance reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period. The SF-PPR may be found at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants\\_resources.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html).

#### **Federal Financial Reports (FFR)**

As of February 1, 2011, HHS began the transition from use of the SF-269, Financial Status Report (Short Form or Long Form) to the use of the SF-425 Federal Financial Report for expenditure reporting. SF-269s

will no longer be accepted for expenditure reports due after that date. If an SF-269 is submitted, the ACF will return it and require the recipient to complete the SF-425.

The transition strategy is allowing individual HHS Operating Divisions to select--from a limited number of options--the approach that best fits their programs and business process. This transition does not affect completion or submission of the cash reporting to the HHS Division of Payment Management's Payment Management System (PMS). The primary features of this transition for recipients are that OPDIVs that previously required electronic submission of the SF-269 will receive the SF-425 expenditure reports electronically and, until further notice, OPDIVs that have been receiving expenditure reports in hard copy will continue to do so.

All expenditure reports will be due on one of the standard due dates by which cash reporting is required to be submitted to PMS or at the end of a calendar quarter as determined by the Operating Division. As a result, a recipient that receives awards from more than one OPDIV may be subject to more than one approach, but will not be required to change its current means of submission or be subjected to more than eight standard due dates.

Beginning with budget periods which end from January 1 - March 31, 2011, and for all budget periods thereafter, all affected ACF grantees will be required to submit an SF-425 report as frequently as is required in the terms and conditions of their award using due dates for reports to PMS.

**For budget periods ending in the months of:      The FFR (SF-425) is due to ACF on:**

January 01 through March 31	April 30
April 01 through June 30	July 30
July 01 through September 30	October 30
October 01 through December 31	January 30

Fillable versions of the SF-425 form in Adobe PDF and MS-Excel formats, along with instructions, are available at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_forms](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms), [www.forms.gov](http://www.forms.gov), and on the [ACF Funding Opportunity Website Forms](#) page.

Further instructions will be provided, as necessary, with award terms and conditions that will address specific reporting periods and due dates on an award-by-award basis. Additional information on frequency of reporting is available on the ACF Funding Opportunities website at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/msg\\_sf425.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/msg_sf425.html).

For planning purposes, ACF reporting periods for awards made under this announcement are as follows:

Program Progress Reports: Semi-Annually

Financial Reports: Semi-Annually

Awards issued as a result of this funding opportunity may be subject to the Transparency Act subaward and executive compensation reporting requirements of 2 C.F.R. Part 170. See ACF's [Award Term for Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act \(FFATA\) Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting Requirement](#) implementing this requirement and additional award applicability information.

## **SF-428 Tangible Property Report and SF-429 Real Property Status Report**

As of April 1, 2012, the Administration for Children and Families will begin requiring the use of the SF-428 (Tangible Personal Property Form) as well as the SF-429 (Real Property Status Report).

The SF-428 is a standard form to be used by awarding agencies to collect information related to tangible personal property (equipment and supplies) when required by a Federal financial assistance award. The form consists of the cover sheet (SF-428) and three attachments to be used as required: Annual Report; Final (Award Closeout) Report and a Disposition Request/Report. A Supplemental Sheet, SF-428S, may be used to provide detailed individual item information.

The SF-429 is a standard report to be used by recipients of Federal financial assistance to report real property status (Attachment A) or to request agency instructions on real property (Attachments B, C) that was/will be provided as Government Furnished Property (GFP) or acquired (i.e., purchased or constructed) in whole or in part under a Federal financial assistance award (i.e., grant, cooperative agreement, etc.). This includes real property that was improved using Federal funds and real property that was donated to a Federal project in the form of a match or cost share donation. This report is to be used for awards that establish a Federal Interest on real property.

Beginning with budget periods ending September 30, 2012 and for all budget periods thereafter, all ACF grantees will be required to submit (as applicable) an SF-428 and SF-429 report as frequently as is required in the terms and conditions of their award.

The forms are available at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_forms](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms).

Grantees will regularly update their Federal Project Officer about ongoing evaluation activities and findings in required progress reporting and provide CB with a written report at the end of the project. Grantees in collaboration with each other, their State and Tribal partners, CB, and any applicable national cross-site evaluation contractor(s) may produce a comprehensive evaluation report at the conclusion of the project period and present findings to CB and other stakeholders.

## **VII. Agency Contacts**

### **Program Office Contact**

Liliana Hernandez  
Administration for Children and Families  
Administration on Children, Youth, and Families  
Children's Bureau Headquarters  
Portals Building, 8th Floor  
1250 Maryland Ave SW  
WASHINGTON, DC 20024  
Phone: (202) 205-8086  
Fax: (202) 690-7888  
Email: [liliana.hernandez@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:liliana.hernandez@acf.hhs.gov)



## Office of Grants Management Contact

Daphne Weeden  
CB Operations Center c/o Lux Consulting Group  
8405 Colesville Road, Suite 600  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Phone: (866) 796-1591  
Email: [cb@luxcg.com](mailto:cb@luxcg.com)

### Federal Relay Service:

Hearing-impaired and speech-impaired callers may contact the Federal Relay Service for assistance at 1-800-877-8339 (TTY - Text Telephone or ASCII - American Standard Code For Information Interchange).

## VIII. Other Information

### Reference Websites

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) on the Internet <http://www.hhs.gov/>.

Administration for Children and Families (ACF) on the Internet <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/>.

Administration for Children and Families - ACF Funding Opportunities homepage <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/>.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (C.F.D.A.) <https://www.cfda.gov/>.

Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) <http://www.gpo.gov>.

United States Code (U.S.C) <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/uscode/>.

All required Standard Forms, assurances, and certifications are available on the ACF Forms page at [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants\\_resources.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html).

Grants.gov Forms Repository webpage at [http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms\\_repository\\_information.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp).

Versions of other Standard Forms (SFs) are available on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Grants Management Forms web site at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants\\_forms/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms/).

For information regarding accessibility issues, visit the Grants.gov Accessibility Compliance Page at [http://www07.grants.gov/aboutgrants/accessibility\\_compliance.jsp](http://www07.grants.gov/aboutgrants/accessibility_compliance.jsp)

Sign up to receive notification of ACF Funding Opportunities at [www.Grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp) [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email\\_subscription.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp).

Information on the development of logic models is available at: [http://www.childwelfare.gov/management/effectiveness/logic\\_model.cfm](http://www.childwelfare.gov/management/effectiveness/logic_model.cfm).



## Application Checklist

Applicants may use the checklist below as a guide when preparing your application package.

What to Submit	Where Found	When to Submit
<b>SF-424 - Application for Federal Assistance</b> <b>and</b> <b>SF-P/PSL - Project/Performance Site Location(s)</b>	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2.</i> and found at <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html">http:// www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html</a> and at the Grants.gov Forms Repository at <a href="http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp">http://www.grants.gov/agencies/aforms_repository_information.jsp</a> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
<b>SF-424A - Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs</b> <b>and</b> <b>SF-424B - Assurances - Non-Construction Programs</b>	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2.</i> and found at <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html">http:// www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html</a> .	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
<b>Certification Regarding Lobbying</b>	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2.</i> of the announcement and found at <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html">http:// www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html</a> .	Submission is due with the application package. If it is not submitted with the application package, it may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
<b>SF-LLL - Disclosure of Lobbying Activities</b>	"Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying" is referenced in <i>Section IV.2.</i> and found at <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html">http:// www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html</a> .  Submission of this form is required if any funds have been paid, or will be paid, to any person for influencing, or attempting to influence, an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan.	If submission of this form is applicable, it is due prior at the time of application. It may also be submitted prior to the award of a grant.

<p><b>Survey on Ensuring Equal Opportunity for Applicants</b></p>	<p>Non-profit private organizations (not including private universities) are encouraged to submit the survey with their applications. Applicants applying electronically, may submit this survey along with the application as part of the appendix or as a separate document. Applicants submitting in paper, please place the completed survey in an envelope labeled "Applicant Survey." Seal the envelope and include it along with the application package.</p> <p>The survey is referenced in Section IV.2. of the announcement. The survey may be found at <a href="http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html">http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/grants_resources.html</a>.</p> <p>The survey will not count in the page limitations.</p>	<p><b>Submission is voluntary.</b> Submission may be made with the application by the application due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>. Or, it may be submitted prior to the award of a grant.</p>
<p><b>The Project Description</b></p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i>. This is the title for the project narrative that describes the applicant's plan for the project.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p><b>The Project Budget and Budget Justification</b></p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> of the announcement.</p>	<p>Submission of the Project Budget is required on the appropriate Standard Form (424A or 424C). The Budget Justification is a separate document that may be no longer than 10 pages and is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>
<p><b>Project Sustainability Plan</b></p>	<p>Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> of the announcement. It is an element of the Project Description and will be counted in page limitations that are stated in <i>Section IV.2. Formatting Requirements</i>.</p>	<p>Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i>.</p>

<b>Third-Party Agreements</b>	Referenced in Section IV.2. of the announcement under "Project Description."	If available, submission is due by the application due date found in the Overview and in Section IV.3. If not available at the time of application submission, due by the time of award.
<b>Commitment of Non-Federal Resources</b>	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Budget and Budget Justification</i> of the announcement. Proof of the commitment of Non-Federal Resources may be included in the appendices to the application package.	Submission is due by the application due date found in the Overview and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
<b>Table of Contents</b>	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> . This is an element of the Project Description and will usually be counted in page limitations listed in <i>Section IV.2. Formatting Requirements</i> .	Submission is due as part of the Project Description by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
<b>Logic Model</b>	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> of the announcement. It is an element of the Project Description and will be counted in page limitations that are stated in <i>Section IV.2. Formatting Requirements</i> .	Submission is due with the application package by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .
<b>Proof of Non-Profit Status</b>	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> of the announcement under "Legal Status of Applicant Entity." Proof of non-profit status may be submitted as part of appendices to the application package. It is not considered as part of the project narrative/plan.	Proof of non-profit status should be submitted with the application package by the due date listed in the <i>Overview</i> and <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> . If it is not available at the time of application submission, it must be submitted prior to the award of a grant.
<b>Project Summary/Abstract</b>	Referenced in <i>Section IV.2. The Project Description</i> of the announcement. It is an element of the Project Description and will be counted in page limitations that are stated in <i>Section IV.2. Formatting</i>	Submission is due by the application due date found in the <i>Overview</i> and in <i>Section IV.3. Submission Dates and Times</i> .

**Appendices**